

**GEORGI DIMITROV**

# GEORGI DIMITROV

## Selected Speeches and Articles

With an Introduction  
by  
HARRY POLLITT

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A true revolutionary and proletarian leader is formed in the fire of the class struggle and by making Marxism Leninism his own.

It is not enough to have a revolutionary temperament — one has to understand how to handle the weapon of revolutionary theory.

It is not enough to know theory — one must also forge oneself a strong character with Bolshevik steadfastness.

It is not enough to know what ought to be done — one must also have the courage to carry it out.

One must always be ready to do anything, at any cost, which is of real service to the working-class.

One must be capable of subordinating one's whole personal life to the interests of the proletariat.

G. DIMITROV

(Preface to *The Life of Ernst Thaelmann*).

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## GEORGI DIMITROV

In the passing of Georgi Dimitrov, July 2, 1949, the workers of the world, and the Bulgarian workers in particular, lost one of the most self-sacrificing, thoughtful revolutionary leaders, and one of the greatest Marxists of the present epoch.

The life of Georgi Dimitrov is a glorious page in the struggle of the working people all over the world against fascism and war and for the victory of socialism.

His life and activities are inseparably linked with the Bulgarian people — with its struggles for liberation from the imperialist yoke and from capitalist oppression over the last fifty years, with the people's sufferings and victories, and, finally, with their successes in building the basis of socialism.

I can see him now, unfolding to me his dream of what the workers and peasants of his beloved Bulgaria would make of their beautiful country. And in spite of all the difficulties they would have to surmount, he had the firm and proud conviction that they would succeed.

Georgi Dimitrov's unbreakable faith in the working class gave him, as it gives all who possess it, a strength which the capitalists and social democratic organisations can never give — the faith to triumph over all obstacles, never to be afraid of anything that the enemies of the workers may try and do, and the certainty both of the righteousness of our cause and that it will finally triumph. This lay at the heart of everything to which Dimitrov set his hand, from the time when as a young lad he commenced his activity in the revolutionary movement, to the day he became the proud leader of the new Bulgarian Workers' and Peasants' Fatherland.

Georgi Dimitrov was born on June 18, 1882, into a poor workers' family. It was a family of fighters. His elder brother, Constantine, was secretary of the Print Workers Trade Union in Bulgaria; his other brother Nikolai, living in Odessa, took an active part in the illegal activities of the Bolshevik Party, for which he was sentenced to lifelong exile in Siberia, where he died. His third brother, Todor, was an active Communist in Bulgaria, and was murdered by the police in 1925. The rest of the family also took part in the struggle of the working people.

It was in such a family as this that Georgi Dimitrov was brought up.

From a very early age he suffered hardships, and at twelve years of age he had to leave school and become a printer. At 15 he entered the workers' revolutionary movement, and at 18 he was already secretary of the oldest trade union in Bulgaria, the Print Workers Union.

In 1902, Georgi Dimitrov became a member of the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party, and joined the struggle of the revolutionary Marxist wing, known as the "Narrow Socialists". In 1909 he was elected secretary of the revolutionary trade unions, formed and led by the party of the "Narrow Socialists", in which position he remained until 1924, when the trade unions were dissolved by the fascist government.

As secretary of the Sofia organisation of the "Narrow Socialists", as a County Councillor, a member of Parliament, member of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian trade unions, Dimitrov put his entire energy and his whole personal life at the service of the liberation of the working class.

Organising the workers in their everyday struggle, Dimitrov strove to combine the economic and political struggle of the working class. He ceaselessly explained to the workers that the historic task of the proletariat, the destruction of capitalism and the creation of a socialist society, could be fulfilled only by a persistent political struggle against the ruling class. For his incomparable activity in the struggle against the exploiters and for the defence of the interests of the workers, he won the love of the entire Bulgarian people.

It is characteristic of Georgi Dimitrov that from the very beginning of his political activity he stood firm by the principles of proletarian internationalism. There was no great event in the life of the international working class movement which did not find its response in the Bulgarian trade unions, led by Dimitrov.

The Bulgarian workers carried out strikes and demonstrations in solidarity with the first Russian Revolution of 1905-7. Dimitrov organised collections to help those who were taking part in the revolutionary struggle in Russia, as he did for those taking part in the great strikes in Great Britain, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain and other countries.

During the First World War, Dimitrov organised the struggle against



Bulgaria's being involved. In 1915, when the Bulgarian Government hurled its people into the war on the side of the German imperialists, the "Narrow Socialists" issued the call to struggle against the imperialist war. In parliament they voted against military credits and unmasked the robber aims of the war.

The members of the Central Committee were arrested and put on trial. Dimitrov among them was thrown into prison for his revolutionary work among the soldiers.

At the outbreak of the October Revolution in Russia in 1917, the "Narrow Socialists" taught the Bulgarian workers and peasants to follow the path of the workers and peasants of Russia. Mutinies and great demonstrations culminated in a general uprising which knocked Bulgaria out of the war in September 1918.

Under the leadership of Blagoev and Dimitrov, in 1919, the Party of the "Narrow Socialists" changed its name to the Bulgarian Communist Party and joined the Third International. In 1921, Dimitrov was a delegate of the Bulgarian Communists to the Third Congress of the Communist International in Moscow, where for the first time he met the leaders of the world working class movement — Lenin and Stalin.

May I say, with all due modesty, that this was also the first occasion I had the pleasure and honour of meeting Georgi Dimitrov — an event I can never forget, because the personal charm of the man and his political sagacity made an indelible impression on my mind.

In 1923 the fascist government of the hangman Alexander Tsankov began a bloody onslaught against the Bulgarian working people. It was met with an armed uprising. Dimitrov took the lead and set an example as a brave and unshakeable revolutionary leader. The Bulgarian fascists succeeded in crushing the uprising, but nevertheless, as Dimitrov said, it had created a deep breach between the people and the government which nothing could bridge.

\* \* \*

After 1923, compelled to emigrate abroad, Dimitrov led the life of a professional revolutionary. He worked actively in the Executive Committee of the Communist International and became one of the organisers of the international struggle against fascism.

In 1933 he was arrested by Hitler's Gestapo. After being months on end in chains in his cell, he was placed on trial on the charge of having organised the burning of the Reichstag.

Only a few days before he was arrested I had parted with Dimitrov in a café on the Friedrichstrasse in Berlin. I remember now as clear as daylight the warnings that he gave as to how far the fascists would go in their terrorist activities.

There in the dock at Leipzig, Georgi Dimitrov demonstrated the courage of a revolutionary fighter. He exposed to the whole world the provocation of the Reichstag Fire and unmasked the fascist instigators of war. Before the fascist court he set an example of behaviour befitting a communist revolutionary.

Dimitrov told the fascist judges:

"It is true that I am a Communist, a proletarian revolutionary. It is true also that as a member of the Bulgarian Communist Party and of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, I am a responsible worker. But just because of this, I am not a terrorist adventurer, plotter, or incendiary . . ."

He refused the help of the official Defence Lawyer, announced that he would carry out his own defence, and explained what he was defending.

"I defend my own Communist revolutionary honour.

"I defend my ideas, my Communist views.

"I defend the meaning and content of my life".

Georgi Dimitrov was not defending himself, personally, at the Leipzig Trial, but the great cause of the working class. "No less determined than old Galileo we Communists declare 'And still it moves!' The wheel of history moves on towards the ultimate, inevitable, irrepressible goal of Communism".

From the defendant, he became the inexorable accuser of fascism, and carried millions of people throughout the world forward for the fight for peace and democracy. Progressive people from all countries arose to defend Dimitrov. Mass demonstrations of sympathy and a counter-trial were organised in Britain. Thanks to the mighty protests of the working people, to his own fight in the courtroom, and above all, to the action taken by the Soviet Union, Dimitrov was freed and again had the opportunity of contin-



uing the fight as a leading personality in the international working class movement.

And in our present times, when the Tories and Right-Wing Social Democratic leaders of all capitalist nations fall over themselves to betray the national sovereignty and independence of their countries to the mercenary and aggressive warmongers of the U.S.A., it is timely to remember how proudly and defiantly Dimitrov defended his native land of Bulgaria.

"I think, comrades," he said later, at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, "that when the fascists at the Leipzig trial attempted to slander the Bulgarians as a barbarian people, I was not wrong in taking up the defence of the national honour of the toiling masses of the Bulgarian people, who are struggling heroically against the fascist usurpers, the real barbarians and savages; nor was I wrong in declaring that I had no cause to be ashamed of being a Bulgarian, but that, on the contrary, I was proud of being a son of the heroic Bulgarian working class."

\* \* \*

In Moscow, Georgi Dimitrov devoted himself entirely to the strenuous work of uniting all the forces of the working people in the world against fascism. Elected General Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in 1935, Dimitrov, under the leadership of the great Stalin, worked out the strategy and tactics of the struggle against fascism. He fought persistently for the establishment and consolidation of the united, proletarian and people's front against fascism, and against the war which the governing cliques in Germany, Italy and Japan were at that time feverishly preparing, with the help of the Anglo-American imperialists.

In his report to the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, in his speeches to the Plenums of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, and in the press, Dimitrov ceaselessly appealed to the peoples of all countries to rally around the Communist Party and bar the road of the fascist aggressors.

Dimitrov carried out great work in educating and developing the leading cadres in the Communist Parties — cadres faithful to the great teachings of Marxism-Leninism, to the principles of proletarian interna-

tionalism, to the defence of the interests of the peoples in their countries.

"Comrades", said Dimitrov, addressing the Bulgarian Communist emigrés in Moscow in May 1934, "we have learnt, we are now learning, and we shall still learn from the glorious Russian Bolsheviks. We are happy that following the example of the old Bolsheviks who are still alive, we can further strengthen our will for the fight, and our confidence in victory.

"I personally, sitting manacled in prison, remembered in my hardest hours how the revolutionary proletariat used to live in old Tsarist Russia. I remembered with what energy and courage hundreds of thousands of our old Bolsheviks fought against the hardship and dangers which confronted them, and what heroism the Russian Bolsheviks showed in the period of the Civil War and afterwards, in the period of the building up of socialism!

"And if they, I said to myself, bore all these sufferings honourably and bravely, then I, a Bulgarian Communist, standing on a world tribune, should also stand firmly and unwaveringly at my post, and set an example to the German proletariat, to my Bulgarian brothers, and to all the international proletariat, an example of how a Bolshevik can, and should, fight the bourgeoisie and fascism, most deeply convinced of the inevitability of the final victory of the proletarian revolution."

During the Second World War, Dimitrov worked to mobilise all progressive forces in the world for the fight against the German-fascist marauders. He was one of Stalin's closest associates in teaching how to broaden the national liberation, anti-fascist movement in the countries occupied by the Hitlerites.

During the national liberation struggles, the unity of the peoples grew stronger. The embryo of the future people's power was developing, the permanent basis of the new people's power was being laid.

For his outstanding work in the struggle against fascism, Georgi Dimitrov, in 1945, was awarded the Order of Lenin by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

After the war Georgi Dimitrov ceaselessly exposed the intrigues of the Anglo-American instigators of a new war. He passionately appealed to the working people all over the world to bar the road of the new candidates for world domination. With a passion which was characteristic of him, and with the steadfastness of a proletarian revolutionary, Dimitrov stressed



the inevitability of the victory of the working class — at the head of all the working people — over the dark forces of reaction and fascism.

“The whole of historical development, comrades” said Dimitrov, “is moving in the interests of the working class. The attempts of the reactionaries, of fascists of all kinds, of the entire world bourgeoisie, to turn back the wheel of history, are in vain.”

\* \* \*

While carrying out his political and revolutionary activities in the international field, Dimitrov never separated himself from his native Bulgarian people, never forgot their struggle and their everyday needs. Wherever he was during the years of his forced emigration, he always closely followed the life and struggles of the Bulgarian people, directing every step taken by the revolutionary fighters of his Motherland, Bulgaria. There was no action taken by the democratic forces in Bulgaria without the leading counsel of Dimitrov.

Dimitrov combined the features of a steadfast proletarian internationalist and of a passionate patriot. Always and everywhere, he stood for the true interests of his people.

During the war years, he formulated the programme of the Fatherland Front, and led the armed struggle of the Bulgarian people against the fascist invaders, and their agents in the country. The name of Comrade Dimitrov inspired tens of thousands of Bulgarian patriots, who took up their rifles for the fight against fascist domination and capitalist exploitation.

On September 9, 1944, under his leadership and with the decisive help of the liberating Soviet army, the Bulgarian people overthrew the fascist government and for the first time in the history of the country, took the fate of the people and of the state into their own hands. The example and the name of Dimitrov inspired the Bulgarian soldiers and their commanders, who helped to defeat the German fascists. In the early days after September 9, his constant counsel was a guide for the young government of the people.

In November 1945, after 22 years of exile, Georgi Dimitrov again stepped on to his native soil. Back in Bulgaria, he worked day and night. He directly led all the activities of the party. He addressed all sections of the working people — miners, transport workers, tobacco and textile



workers, peasants, office workers, women and youth, and intellectuals. He put before them concrete and clear tasks, appealed to them to fight for fundamental, democratic changes in the country, and for the creation of the conditions for building socialism in Bulgaria. Under his leadership, the Bulgarian people carried out a referendum for the abolition of the monarchy, resulting in a unanimous vote for a People's Republic.

After the Communist-led Fatherland Front had won a great election victory, Georgi Dimitrov became Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bulgaria. Under his leadership, the new Constitution was drafted, widely discussed and adopted. This Constitution gave legal form to the basic, democratic changes which had taken place in Bulgaria. Under his leadership, Bulgaria started on the road to socialism.

In December 1948, the Fifth Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party took place, in which the power and influence of the Party was clearly expressed. Georgi Dimitrov delivered an outstanding report, in which he analysed the long struggle of the Bulgarian Communists for the freedom and independence of the country, for fundamental, democratic changes in Bulgaria. He indicated the further path of development of the Party and the country, and posed as an immediate task for the Bulgarian Communists and for the entire people, the laying of the foundations of a socialist society in Bulgaria.

In this report, Dimitrov gave a theoretical summing-up of the post-war developments in Bulgaria, and defined the road for the building of socialism in the country. The building of a socialist society in Bulgaria would be carried out through the industrialisation and electrification of the country, the mechanisation of rural economy on the basis of co-operatives, the further strengthening of the regime of people's democracy, which carries out the functions of the proletarian dictatorship and develops in alliance and friendship with the Soviet Union, in hard class struggle against internal and foreign reaction.

“According to Marxist-Leninist principles, the Soviet regime and people's democracy are two forms of one and the same rule — the rule of the working class in alliance with and at the head of the working people from towns and villages. They are two forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The particular form of transition from capitalism to socialism in Bul-

garia does not and cannot alter the basic laws of the transition period from capitalism to socialism, which are valid for all countries. The transition to socialism cannot be carried out without the dictatorship of the proletariat against the capitalist elements and for the organisation of the socialist economy . . .

“From the fact that the people's democracy and Soviet regime coincide in the most important and decisive respect, i.e. that they both represent the rule of the working class in alliance and at the head of the working people, there follow some very essential conclusions concerning the necessity of making the most thorough study and the widest application of the great experience of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. And this experience, adapted to our conditions, is the only and best model for the construction of socialism in Bulgaria, as well as in the other people's democracies.”

\* \* \*

Georgi Dimitrov educated the working people of Bulgaria in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and international solidarity. He always appealed for the use of the great teachings of Lenin and Stalin and the rich experience of the Bolshevik Party as a guide.

He taught the Bulgarian Communists to be vigilant, to be always faithful to the great cause of Lenin and Stalin.

“Our Party” said Georgi Dimitrov, “has before it the example of the great Bolshevik Party, whose Central Committee and great leader Comrade Stalin, have lent us more than once invaluable aid by their advice and guidance. Our Party, which takes an active part in the Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties, is proud to belong to the great family of world communism, headed by the Bolshevik Party and the leader of progressive mankind, Joseph Vissarionovitch Stalin”.

Under Dimitrov's ideological leadership, the treacherous gang of foreign agents led by Traicho Kostov, which had penetrated the Bulgarian Communist Party, was crushed.

The Bulgarian Communist Party, headed by Georgi Dimitrov, decisively proclaimed itself against the nationalistic and treacherous clique of Tito in Yugoslavia. Giving all his energy to the consolidation of the anti-



imperialist camp, and so uniting all democratic forces, Dimitrov mercilessly exposed the treachery of the Titoites to the cause of the united, anti-imperialist front.

Until the very last moment of his life, Georgi Dimitrov directed the social changes in Bulgaria, and the building of the basis of socialism. Under his leadership, the Bulgarian working people have healed the wounds of war and revived their national economy, which had been plundered by the Germans. Under his leadership, the nationalisation of industry and the land reforms were carried out. The factories passed into the hands of the people, and thousands of landless peasants received land for the first time. Under Dimitrov's leadership, there began the transformation of village economy through the co-operative tilling of the soil.

Under Dimitrov's leadership, the Bulgarian Government concluded agreements for friendship and mutual aid with the great Soviet Union and with the People's Democracies, guaranteeing the country's national independence and further development on the road to socialism.

\* \* \*

The death of Georgi Dimitrov was deeply mourned by the Bulgarian people and by working people all over the world. Twenty-seven foreign delegations were present at his funeral.

The scenes in Sofia on that sad and unforgettable day of July 10, 1949, can never be effaced from the memory. Only once before have I seen such grief, tears and sense of loss depicted on people's faces, and that was at the funeral of Lenin.

To see such scenes is indeed to read history in people's eyes. In these solemn days there will be millions of working men and women, peasants and their families, the best in the ranks of the working intellectuals and all who love peace, who will think with sadness, but with a great pride, of everything that Dimitrov stood for, fought for, and yet saw achieved.

Let us resolve to carry his life's work forward in the conditions of our time, fortified and strengthened by his immortal example and by his precepts, to intensify the fight for peace and remove for ever the shadow of imperialist war.

HARRY POLLITT

# I

## THE REICHSTAG FIRE TRIAL

### DIMITROV'S FINAL SPEECH

*Dimitrov:* "By virtue of Article 258 of the Criminal Procedure Code I am entitled to speak both as defender and as accused."

*President:* "You have the right to the last word and you can make use of that right now."

*Dimitrov:* "By virtue of the Criminal Procedure Code I have the right to argue with the prosecution and then to deliver my final speech."

My Lords, Judges, Gentlemen for the Prosecution and the Defence! At the very beginning of this trial three months ago as an accused man I addressed a letter to the President of the Court. I wrote that I regretted that my attitude in Court should lead to collisions with the judges, but I categorically refuted the suggestion which was made against me that I had misused my right to put questions and my right to make statements in order to serve propagandist ends. Because I was wrongly accused before this Court I naturally used all the means at my disposal to defend myself against false charges.

In the letter I acknowledged that several of my questions had not been as apposite from the point of view of time and formulation as I could have wished. May I explain this by referring to the fact that my knowledge of German law is but limited and further that this is the first time in my life in which I have played a part in judicial proceedings of this character. If I had enjoyed the services of a lawyer of my own choice I should doubtless have known how to avoid these misunderstandings so harmful to my own defence. Permit me to recall that all my requests for the admission as my defending counsel of MM. Detcheff, Moro-Giafferi, Campinchi, Torres, Gallagher and Lehmann were one after another rejected by the Supreme Court for various reasons. I have no personal distrust of Dr. Teichert either as a man or as a lawyer, but in the present conditions in Germany I cannot have the necessary confidence in his official defence. For this reason



I am attempting to defend myself, a course in which I may have been sometimes guilty of taking steps legally inapposite.

In the interests of my defence before the Supreme Court and also, as I am convinced, in the interests of the normal course of the trial, I now apply to the Court for the last time to permit the lawyer, Marcel Willard, engaged by my sister, to undertake my defence in conjunction with Teichert. If the Court also rejects this application, then the only course remaining open for me is to defend myself as best I can alone.

\* \* \*

Now that the Court has rejected my last application, I have decided to defend myself. I want neither the honey nor the poison of a defence which is forced upon me. During the whole course of these proceedings I have defended myself. Naturally I do not feel myself in any way bound by the speech made by Dr. Teichert in my defence. Decisive for my case is only that which I say and have said myself to the Court. I do not wish to offend my party comrade Torgler, particularly as, in my opinion, his defending counsel has already offended him enough, but as far as I am concerned I would sooner be sentenced to death by this Court though innocent, than be acquitted by the sort of defence put forward by Dr. Sack.

*President* (interrupting Dimitrov): "It is none of your business to make criticisms of that nature here."

I admit that my tone is hard and sharp. The struggle of my life has always been hard and sharp. My tone is frank and open. I seek to call things by their correct names. I am no lawyer appearing before this Court in the mere way of his profession. I am defending myself, an accused Communist; I am defending my political honour, my honour as a revolutionary; I am defending my Communist ideology, my ideals, the content and significance of my whole life. For these reasons every word which I say in this Court is a part of me, each phrase is the expression of my deep indignation against the unjust accusation, against the putting of this anti-Communist crime, the burning of the Reichstag, to the account of the Communists.

I have often been reproached that I do not take the highest Court in Germany seriously. That is absolutely unjustified. It is true that the highest

law for me is the programme of the Communist International; that the highest Court for me is the Control Commission of the Communist International. But to me as an accused man the Supreme Court of the Reich is something to be considered in all seriousness—not only in that its members possess high legal qualifications, but also because it is the highest legal organism of the German State, of the ruling order of society; a body which can dispose of the highest penalties. I can say with an easy conscience that everything which I have stated to this Court and everything which I have spoken to the public is the truth. I have always spoken with seriousness and from my inner convictions.

*President:* "I shall not permit you to indulge in Communist propaganda in this Court. You have persisted in it. If you do not refrain I shall have to prevent you from speaking."

I must deny absolutely the suggestion that I have pursued propagandist aims. It may be that my defence before this Court has had a certain propagandist effect. It is also possible that my conduct before this Court may serve as an example for other accused Communists. But those were not the aims of my defence. My aims were these: to refute the indictment and to refute the accusation that Torgler, Popov, Tanev and myself had anything to do with the Reichstag fire.

I know that no one in Bulgaria believes in our alleged complicity in the fire. I know that everywhere else abroad hardly anyone believes that we had anything to do with it. But in Germany other conditions prevail and in Germany it is not impossible that people might believe such extraordinary things. For this reason I desired to prove that the Communist Party had and has nothing whatever to do with the crime. If the question of propaganda is to be raised, then I may fairly say that many utterances made within this Court were of a propagandist character. The appearance here of Goebbels and Goering had an indirect propagandist effect favourable to Communism, but no one can reproach them on account of their conduct having produced such results.

I have not only been roundly abused by the press—something to which I am completely indifferent—but my people have also, through me, been characterised as savage and barbarous. I have been called a suspicious



character from the Balkans, and a wild Bulgarian. I cannot allow such things to pass in silence.

It is true that Bulgarian fascism is savage and barbarous. But the working class, the peasants and the culture of Bulgaria are neither savage nor barbarous. True that the level of material well-being is not so high in the Balkans as elsewhere in Europe but it is false to say that the people of Bulgaria are politically or mentally on a lower scale than the peoples of other countries. Our political struggle, our political aspirations are no less lofty than those of other peoples. A people which lived for five hundred years under a foreign yoke without losing its language and its national character, a people of workers and peasants who have fought and are fighting Bulgarian fascism—such a people is not savage and barbarous. Only fascism in Bulgaria is savage and barbarous. But I ask you, in what country does not fascism bear these qualities?

*President (interrupting Dimitrov):* “Are you attempting to refer to the situation in Germany?”

At a period of history when the ‘German’ Emperor Karl V vowed that he would talk German only to his horse, at a time when the nobility and intellectual circles of Germany wrote only Latin and were ashamed of their mother tongue, Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius invented and spread the use of the old Bulgarian script.

The Bulgarian people has fought obstinately and with all its strength against foreign oppression. Therefore I protest here and now against these attacks on my people. I have no cause to be ashamed of being Bulgarian, in fact I am proud to say that I am the son of the Bulgarian working people.

I must preface my discussion of the main issues with this statement. Dr. Teichert has seen fit to accuse us of being responsible for our own plight and position here. In reply I must say that much time has elapsed from March 9, 1933, when we were arrested, to the beginning of this trial. Any suspicious circumstance could have been thoroughly investigated during that period. During the preliminary inquiries I spoke with officials, members of the investigating authority, concerning the Reichstag fire.

Those officials assured me that we Bulgarians were not to be charged with complicity in that crime. We were to be charged solely in connection with

our false passports, our adopted names and our incorrect addresses.

*President:* "This is new matter. It has not been mentioned in the proceedings hitherto and therefore you have no right to raise it at this stage."

Mr. President, during that time every circumstance could have been investigated in order promptly to clear us of any charge in relation to the fire. The indictment declares that "Dimitrov, Popov and Tanev have alleged that they were mere political fugitives from Bulgaria but that it must be considered as proved that they were in Germany for the purpose of illegal political activities." They are, as the indictment further declares. "emissaries of Moscow sent to Germany to prepare an armed insurrection." Page 83 of the indictment points out that "although Dimitrov declares that he was not in Berlin from the 25th to the 28th of February, this does not materially affect the position and could not free him from the charge of being implicated in the burning of the Reichstag." Complicity, continues the indictment, is proved not only by the evidence of Helmer but by other facts . . .

*President (interrupting):* "You must not read the whole of the indictment here. In any case the Court is quite familiar with it."

As far as that goes, I must state that three-quarters of what the counsel for the prosecution and defence have said here was generally notorious long ago. But that fact did not prevent them from bringing it forward again. (*Laughter in Court.*) Helmer stated that Dimitrov and van der Lubbe were together in the Bayernhof restaurant. Now permit me to refer again to the indictment which says: "Although Dimitrov was not caught red-handed at the scene of the crime, he nevertheless took part in the prepararions for the burning of the Reichstag. He went to Munich in order to supply himself with an alibi. The Communist pamphlets found in Dimitrov's possession prove that he took part in the Communist movement in Germany." That is the basis of this precipitate, this aborted indictment.

(The President here interrupted Dimitrov again and warned him not to refer disrespectfully to the indictment.)



Very well, Mr. President, I shall choose other expressions.

*President:* "In any case you must not use such disrespectful terms."

I shall return in another context to the methods of the prosecution and the indictment.

The direction of this trial has been determined by the theory that the burning of the Reichstag was an act of the German Communist Party, of the Communist International. This anti-Communist deed, the Reichstag fire, was actually blamed upon the Communists and declared to be the signal for an armed Communist insurrection, a beacon fire for the overthrow of the present German constitution. An anti-Communist character has been given to the whole proceedings by the use of this theory. The indictment runs : " . . . The charge rests on the basis that this criminal outrage was to be a signal, a beacon for the enemies of the State who were then to commence their attack on the German Reich, to smash the existing constitution on the orders of the Third International and to set up in its place the dictatorship of the proletariat, a Soviet State."

My Lords, this is not the first time that such an outrage has been falsely attributed to Communists. I cannot here enumerate all the instances, but I would remind you of a railway outrage committed at Jüterbog in Germany some time ago by a certain mentally-deranged adventurer and agent provocateur. For weeks the newspapers declared both in Germany and abroad that the outrage had been committed by the German Communist Party, that it was a terroristic act of Communists. Then it transpired that a mentally-afflicted adventurer, Matushka, was the author of the crime. He was arrested and convicted. Let me recall yet another instance, the assassination of the French President by Gorgulov. In this case too the press of many lands proclaimed for weeks that the hand of Communism had shown itself. Gorgulov was pronounced to be a Communist and emissary of the Soviet. And what was the truth? The outrage was the work of Russian white-guardists, Gorgulov was an agent provocateur who aimed at destroying the friendly relations between France and the Soviet. I would also remind you of the outrage in Sofia cathedral. This incident was not organised by the Bulgarian Communist Party, but the Bulgarian Communist Party was persecuted on account of it. Under this false accusation two

thousand Bulgarian Communists, workmen, peasants and intellectuals were murdered. That act of provocation, the blowing up of Sofia cathedral, was actually organised by the Bulgarian police.

*President* (interrupting): "That has nothing to do with this trial."

The police official Heller, spoke in his evidence of Communist propaganda for arson. I asked him whether he had ever heard of arson having been committed by capitalists in order to get insurance monies and of Communists having been blamed for them. On October 5, 1933, the *Völkischer Beobachter* wrote that the Stettin police . . .

*President*: "The article in question was not referred to at any time during these proceedings."

*Dimitrov* attempted to continue referring to the article.

*President*: "Do not dare to refer here to matters which have not been previously referred to in the course of the trial."

*Dimitrov*: "A whole series of fires . . ."

*President* again interrupts.

It was dealt with during the preliminary proceedings, because the Communists were accused of having been responsible for a whole series of fires which turned out to have been committed by the owners of the buildings themselves "in order to make employment." I should like also for a moment to refer to the question of forged documents. Numbers of such forgeries have been made use of against the working class. Their name is legion. There was for example the notorious Zinoviev letter, a letter which never emanated from Zinoviev, and which was a deliberate forgery. The English Conservative Party made effective use of the forgery against the working class. I would like to remind you also of a series of forgeries which have played a part in German politics . . .

*President*: "That lies outside the scope of these proceedings."

It was alleged here that the burning of the Reichstag was to be the signal for the breaking out of an armed insurrection. Attempts were made to justify this theory after the following fashion: Goering declared before the Court that the German Communist Party was compelled to incite the masses and to undertake some violent adventure when Hitler came to



power. He proclaimed, "The Communists were forced to do something, then or never!" He stated that the Communist party had for years been appealing to the masses against the National-Socialist Party and that when the latter attained power the Communists had no alternative but to do something immediately or not at all. The Public Prosecutor attempted more clearly and ingeniously to formulate this hypothesis.

(President again interrupted Dimitrov.)

The statement which Goering as chief prosecutor made was developed by the Public Prosecutor in this Court. Dr. Werner declared "that the Communist Party had been forced into a situation in which it must either give battle or capitulate without even making preparations for a fight; that in the circumstances was its only alternative; that it had either to surrender its aims without a struggle or take a risk, dare a hazard which might alter the circumstances in its favour. It might fail, but its situation then could be no worse than having surrendered without firing a shot!" This hypothesis presented by the prosecution and laid at the door of the Communists is certainly no Communist hypothesis. It shows that the enemies of the Communist Party do not know much about Communism. He who desires to fight his enemy well, must learn to know him. Prohibition of the Party, dissolution of the mass working-class organisations, loss of legality are serious blows indeed for the revolutionary movement. In February 1933 the Communist Party was faced with the threat of suppression, the Communist press had been prohibited and the destruction of the Party as a legal organisation was momentarily expected. These things the Communist Party knew well. They were pointed out in pamphlets and newspapers. The German Communist Party was well aware of the fact that although the Communist Parties of many other lands were illegal they nevertheless continued to exist and to carry on their activities. Such is the position in Bulgaria, Poland, Italy and many other lands. From my own experience I am able to speak of the position in Bulgaria. The Communist Party there was prohibited after the insurrection of 1923, but has nevertheless continued to exist and to work. Despite great sacrifices it has in time become more powerful than in 1923 prior to its suppression.

Anyone with a critical faculty can appreciate the importance of this

phenomenon. Given the necessary situation the German Communist Party can still carry out a successful revolution. The experience of the Russian Communist Party proves this. Despite its illegality and the violence of the persecution to which it was subjected, that Party won over the working class in the end and came to power at its head. The leaders of the German Communist Party could not possibly think that with the suppression of their Party all would be lost; that at any given moment the question was now or never; that the alternative was insurrection or extirpation. The leaders of the German Communist Party could not have entertained such foolish thoughts. Naturally they knew perfectly well that illegality would mean tremendous losses, that it would mean self-sacrifice and heroism, but they also knew that the revolutionary strength of the Party would increase again and that one day it would be able to accomplish its final tasks successfully. For these reasons the possibility of the Communist Party seeking to indulge in any hazards at any moment must be rigorously excluded. The Communists fortunately are not so near-sighted as their opponents; neither do they lose their heads in difficult situations.

It must be added that, like every other Communist Party, the German Communist Party is a section of the Communist International. What is the Communist International? Permit me to quote from its programme: "The Communist International, an international association of workers, is the association of the Communist Parties in individual lands; it is a united world Communist Party, the leader and organiser of the universal revolutionary movement of the proletariat, the bearer of the principles and aims of Communism. Therefore the Communist International fights to win the the majority of the working class and the broad sections of the peasantry for the establishment of the world dictatorship of the proletariat, for the creation of a world union of Socialist Soviet Republics, for the complete abolition of classes and for the setting up of Socialism as the first stage towards a Communist society."

In this world Party of the Communist International, which numbers millions of members all over the world, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is the strongest single unit. It is not a party in opposition, but the governing Party of the Soviet Union, the largest State in the world. The Communist International, the world Communist Party, judges the political



situation together with the Communist Parties of all countries. The International to which all its sections are directly responsible is a world Party, not a mere organisation of conspirators. Such a world Party does not play with insurrection and revolution. Such a Party cannot officially say one thing to its millions of adherents and at the same time in secret do exactly the opposite. Such a Party, my dear Dr. Sack, does not go in for double book-keeping. . .

*Dr. Sack:* "All right! Carry on with your Communist propaganda!"

Such a Party proceeds with all seriousness and with a full awareness of its responsibility when it approaches the millions of the proletariat and when it adopts its decisions concerning tactics and immediate tasks. It does not go in for double book-keeping. Permit me to quote from the decisions of the Twelfth Plenary Session of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, for these decisions were quoted in Court and I therefore have a right to read them out. According to these decisions the chief tasks of the German Communist Party were: "to mobilise the masses of the toilers in defence of their day to day demands, against the robber offensive of monopoly capital, against fascism, against the emergency decrees, against nationalism and chauvinism and for the development of political and economic strikes and, by the struggle for proletarian internationalism and by demonstrations, to bring the masses to the point of a political general strike: to win over the main sections of the Social-Democratic workers by overcoming the weakness in the trade union activity of the party. The slogan which the German Communist Party must put in the forefront, against the slogan of the fascist dictatorship, 'the Third Reich' and the slogan of social democracy 'the Weimar Republic,' must be the slogan of the workers' and peasants' republic, 'Soviet Germany,' which in itself contains the possibility of the voluntary adherence to such Soviet Republic of Austria and other German districts."

Mass work, mass activity, mass opposition and the united front—no adventurism—these are the elements of Communist tactics.

A copy of the appeal of the Executive Committee of the Communist International was found in my possession, I take it that I may read from it. Two points in it are of particular importance. The appeal speaks of

demonstrations in various countries in connection with the events in Germany. It further speaks of the tasks of the Communist Party in Germany in its fight against the National-Socialist terror and for the defence of the organisations and the press of the working class. (*Dimitrov then read the appeal*).

This appeal contains no mention of any immediate struggle for power. Such a task was put forward neither by the Communist International nor by the German Communist Party. It is of course true that the appeal of the Communist International does not preclude the possibility of armed insurrection. From this the Court has falsely concluded that the question of armed insurrection was an immediate one and that, having an armed insurrection as one of its aims, the German Communist Party must necessarily have prepared for an insurrection and worked for its immediate outbreak. But that is illogical, it is untrue, to use no stronger expression. Naturally the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat is the task of all Communist Parties the world over. That is our principle; that our aim. But the achievement of that aim is bound up with a process and a stage of development. It does not depend exclusively upon the forces of the working class, other sections of the toilers are necessary to its accomplishment. Everyone knows that the German Communist Party was in favour of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but that is by no means a point decisive for these proceedings. The point is simply this: was an armed insurrection aimed at the seizure of power actually planned to take place on February 27, 1933, in connection with the Reichstag fire?

What, my Lords, have been the results of the legal investigations? The legend that the Reichstag fire was a Communist act has been completely shattered. Unlike some counsel here, I shall not quote much of the evidence.

To any person of normal intelligence at least this point is now made completely clear, that the Reichstag fire had nothing whatever to do with any activity of the German Communist Party, not only nothing to do with an insurrection, but nothing to do with a strike, a demonstration or anything of that nature. The legal investigations have proved this up to the hilt. The Reichstag fire was not regarded by anyone—I exclude criminals and the mentally deranged—as the signal for insurrection. No one observed any deed, act or attempt at insurrection in connection with the



Reichstag fire. The very stories of such things expressly appertain to a much later date. At that moment the working class was in a state of alarm against the attacks of Fascism. The German Communist Party was seeking to organise the opposition of the masses in their own defence. But it was shown that the Reichstag fire furnished the occasion and the signal for unleashing the most terrific campaign of suppression against the German working class and its vanguard the Communist Party. It has been proved beyond refutation that the responsible members of the German Government did not in the least consider the possibility of a Communist insurrection on February 27 or 28. Upon this point I put many questions to the witnesses who appeared here. In particular I asked Heller, the notorious Karwahne, Frey and the police officers such questions. Despite other contradictions in their evidence they were all agreed on one thing, that they neither knew nor had heard anything about a threatening Communist insurrection. That indicates that the Government had taken no measures of any kind against the possibility of such an insurrection.

The President then pointed out that the Police Chief of the Eastern Command had given such evidence.

That official said no more than this: that he was summoned to Goering who gave him verbal instructions concerning the fight against Communism, that is to say, for the suppression of Communist meetings, strikes, demonstrations, election propaganda, etc. But his evidence mentioned no measures to be taken against the threat of an imminent Communist insurrection. Yesterday Dr. Seuffert dealt in his speech with the very same point and arrived at the conclusion that no governmental authority was anticipating the outbreak of any insurrection. He referred also to the evidence of Goebbels who stated, whether truly or not is another question, that when he first heard the news of the Reichstag fire he did not believe it! To this point the Government's emergency decree issued on the morning after the fire provides further proof. Read the decree—what does it say? It announces the suspension of various articles of the constitution, particularly those guaranteeing the inviolability of the person, the freedom of organisation and the press, the immunity of domicile and so forth. That is the essence of the emergency decree, its second paragraph.

The President again interrupts Dimitrov, accusing him of wandering from the point.

I should like to point out that under this emergency decree not only Communist, but also Social-Democratic and Christian workmen were arrested and their organisations suppressed. I would like to stress the fact that although this decree was directed chiefly against the Communist Party, it was not directed solely against them. This law which was necessary for the proclamation of the state of emergency was directed against all the other political parties and groups. It stands in direct organic connection with the Reichstag fire.

*President:* "If you attack the German Government I shall deprive you of the right to address the Court."

... One question has not been in the least elucidated, either by the prosecution or by the defending counsel. This omission does not surprise me. For it is a question which must have given them some anxiety. I refer to the question of the political situation in Germany in February 1933—a matter which I must perforce deal with now. The political situation towards the end of February 1933 was this, that a bitter struggle was taking place within the camp of the "National Front."

*President:* "You are again raising matters which I have repeatedly forbidden you to mention."

... I should like to remind the Court of my application that Schleicher, Brüning, von Papen, Hugenberg and Duesterberg, the Vice-Chairman of the Stahlhelm organisation, should be summoned as witnesses.

*President:* "The Court rejected the application and you have no right to refer to it again."

*Dimitrov:* "I know that, and more, I know why!"

*President:* "It is unpleasant for me continually to have to interrupt you in your closing speech, but you must respect my directions."

... This struggle taking place in the camp of the "National Front" was connected with the struggle which was being waged behind the scenes amongst the leaders of German economy. On the one hand was the Krupp-



Thyssen circle, which for many years past has supported the National-Socialists, on the other hand, being gradually pushed into the background, were their opponents. Thyssen and Krupp designed to establish absolutism, a political dictatorship under their own personal direction; it was to this end that the crushing of the revolutionary working class was necessary. At the same time the Communist Party was striving to establish a united working-class front and so consolidate all forces in resistance to the National-Socialist attempts to destroy the working-class movement. The need for a united front was felt by many Social-Democratic workers. The meaning of the united front in February and March 1933 was the mobilisation of the working class against the principle of brutal absolutism established by the National-Socialists, it meant neither insurrection nor preparations for insurrection.

*President:* "You have always implied that your sole interest was the Bulgarian political situation. Your present remarks however show that you were also keenly interested in the political situation in Germany."

. . . Mr. President, you are making an accusation against me. I can only make this reply; that as a Bulgarian revolutionary I am interested in the revolutionary movement all over the world. I am, for instance, interested in the political situation in South America and, although I have never been there, I know as much about it as I do of German politics. That does not mean that when a government building in South America is burned down I am the culprit! I am interested in German politics, but I do not meddle in German political affairs.

During these legal proceedings I have learned much, and thanks to my political capacity for appreciating things much has become clear to me. The political situation at that time was governed by two chief factors: the first was the effort of the National-Socialists to attain power, the second, the counter-factor, was the efforts of the German Communist Party to build up a united working-class front against fascism. In my view, the accuracy of this has been made abundantly clear during these proceedings. The National-Socialists needed something which would both divert the attention of the people from the differences within the national front and, at the same time, break up the unity of the working class front. The

“National Government” needed a passable excuse for its emergency decree of February 28, 1933, which abolished the liberty of the press and of the individual and introduced a system of police persecution, concentration camps and other measures against the Communists.

*President:* “Now you have reached the limit, you are making suggestions.”

*Dimitrov:* “My only desire is to explain the political situation in Germany on the eve of the fire as I understand it to have been.”

*President:* “This court is no place for unwarranted suggestions against the government and for statements long since refuted.”

... The attitude of the working class at this time was a defensive one, the Communist Party was, therefore, doing its best to organise a united front ...

*President:* “You must proceed to your own defence if you want to, otherwise you will not have sufficient time.”

... Once before I stated that I was in accord with the indictment on one point, and now I am compelled to reaffirm my agreement. I allude to the question whether van der Lubbe acted alone in setting fire to the Reichstag or whether he had accomplices. The junior prosecuting counsel, Parisius, declared that the fate of the accused depended upon the answer to the question whether van der Lubbe had accomplices. To this I answer, no, a thousand noes! Such a conclusion is illogical and does not follow. My own deduction is that van der Lubbe did not set fire to the Reichstag alone. On the basis of the experts' opinions and the evidence which has been submitted I conclude that the fire in the Plenary Sessions Chamber was of a nature different from that in the restaurant, the ground floor, etc. The Sessions Chamber was set on fire by other persons, employing other means. Although coincident in time with the fires caused by van der Lubbe himself, the fire in the Sessions Chamber is fundamentally different. Van der Lubbe has by no means told the truth in this Court and he remains persistently silent. Although he did have accomplices, this fact does not decide the fate of the other accused. Van der Lubbe was not alone, true; but neither Dimitrov nor Torgler nor Popov nor Tanev was in his com-



pany. Is it not probable that van der Lubbe met someone in Henningsdorf on February 26 and told him of his attempts to set fire to the Town Hall and the Palace? Whereat the person in question replied that things such as those were mere child's play, that the burning down of the Reichstag during the elections would be something real? Is that not probably the manner in which through an alliance between political provocation and political insanity the Reichstag fire was conceived? While the representative of political insanity sits to-day in the dock, the representative of provocation has disappeared! Whilst this fool, van der Lubbe, was carrying out his clumsy attempts at arson in the corridors and cloak-rooms, were not other unknown persons preparing the conflagration in the Sessions Chamber and making use of that secret inflammable liquid of which Dr. Schatz here spoke?

(At this point van der Lubbe began to laugh silently. His whole body was shaken with spasms of laughter. The attention of everyone, the Court and the accused included, was directed upon him. Dimitrov resumed, pointing at van der Lubbe).

The unknown accomplices made all the preparations for the conflagration and then disappeared, without a trace. Now this stupid tool, this miserable Faust is here in the dock, while Mephistopheles has disappeared. The link between van der Lubbe and the representatives of political provocation, the enemies of the working class, was forged in Henningsdorf.

The Public Prosecutor declared that van der Lubbe was a Communist. He went further, he asserted that even if van der Lubbe was not a Communist he carried out his deed in the interests of and in association with the Communist Party. That argument is entirely false. What is van der Lubbe? A Communist? Inconceivable! An anarchist? No! He is a declassed worker, a rebellious member of the scum of society. He is a misused creature who has been played off against the working class. No Communist, no anarchist anywhere in the world would conduct himself in Court as van der Lubbe has done. Anarchists often do senseless things, but invariably when they are haled into Court they stand up like men and explain their aims. If a Communist had done anything of this sort, he would not remain silent knowing that four innocent men stood in the dock alongside him.

Van der Lubbe is no Communist. He is no anarchist; he is the misused tool of fascism.

The Chairman of the Communist Parliamentary Group and we Bulgarians accused alongside him have nothing in common, nor any connection with this creature, this poor misused scapegoat. Permit me to remind the Court that on the morning of February 28 Goering issued a statement on the fire, declaring that Torgler and Koenen had together fled from the Reichstag at 10 o'clock the previous evening. This statement was broadcast all over Germany. In the same statement Goering declared that the Communists had set the Reichstag on fire. Yet no attempt has been made to investigate van der Lubbe's movements in Henningsdorf. No search is made for the man with whom van der Lubbe passed the night there.

*President:* "When do you intend to conclude your speech?"

*Dimitrov:* "I want to speak for another half-hour. I must express my views on this question."

*President:* "You cannot go on for ever."

Mr. President, during the three months this trial has lasted you have silenced me on many occasions with the assurance that at the conclusion of the trial I should be able to speak fully in my defence. The trial is drawing to a close now, but contrary to your assurance you are now limiting me in my right to address the Court. The question of what happened in Henningsdorf is indeed of importance. The man with whom van der Lubbe spent the night there, Waschinski, has not been found and my suggestion that the police should search for him was rejected as useless. Had van der Lubbe met Communists in Henningsdorf the question would have been gone into long ago, Mr. President! But no one is interested in finding Waschinski. The young man who brought the first news of the fire to the police at the Brandenburger Tor has not been searched for, his identity remains unestablished, he is still unknown. The preliminary examination was conducted in a false direction. Dr. Albrecht, the National-Socialist deputy who hurried out of the Reichstag after the fire had begun, was hardly interrogated. The incendiaries were sought where they were not to be found, in the ranks of the Communist Party, rather than where they would

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have been found. Thus the real culprits were permitted to disappear. As the real incendiaries could and durst not be found, other persons were taken in their stead.

*President:* "I forbid you to make such statements and I give you another ten minutes only."

I have the right to lay my own reasoned proposals for the verdict before the Court. The Public Prosecutor stated that all the evidence given by Communists was not worthy of credence. I shall not adopt the contrary view. Thus I shall not declare that all the evidence given by National-Socialist witnesses is unreliable. I shall not state that they are all liars for I believe that amongst the millions of National-Socialists there are some honest people.

*President:* "I forbid you to make such ill-intentioned remarks."

. . . But is it not remarkable that all the chief witnesses called in support of the prosecution are National-Socialist deputies, journalists or hangers-on? Karwahne declares that he saw Torgler with van der Lubbe in the Reichstag! Frey declares that he saw Popov with van der Lubbe in the Reichstag. Helmer declares that he saw Dimitrov with van der Lubbe! Weberstedt asserts that he saw Tanev with van der Lubbe! All National-Socialists! Is this a mere accident? The witness, Dr. Dröscher, known under the name of Zimmermann to contribute to the National-Socialist *Völkischer Beobachter*, declares in Court that Dimitrov was responsible for the Sofia cathedral outrage, which was completely disproved, and alleges that he has seen me with Torgler in the Reichstag.

Heller, the police official, read in Court a Communist poem out of a book published in 1925 to prove that the Communists set the Reichstag on fire in 1933. Permit me also the pleasure of quoting a poem, a poem by the greatest German poet, Goethe:

"Lerne zeitig kluger sein.  
Auf des Gluckes grosser Wage  
Steht die Zunge selten ein;  
Du musst steigen oder sinken,

Du musst herrschen und Gewinnen  
Oder dienen und verkieren,  
Leiden oder triumphieren,  
Amboss oder Hammer sein."

Victory or defeat! Be hammer or anvil! The German working class did not realise the truth of this either in 1918, or in 1923 or in 1933 . . .

Much has been said here about German law and I should like to express my views on the matter. Undoubtedly the political constellation ascendant at any particular moment affects the decisions of a Court of law. Let me refer to an authority whom this Court will doubtless accept, the Minister of Justice Kerrl. This gentleman has expressed his views in an interview on the subject of Prussian justice published in the press. He refers to the liberal prejudice that objectivity should be the fount of justice. "Objectivity," he declares, "has no worth in the struggle of a people for existence. It is a dead principle which must be abandoned once and for all. There must be only one judicial criterion: that which will nourish the nation, that which will succour the people!" Justice is a relative conception.

*President:* "Doubtless! But you must now bring forward your final proposals."

The Public Prosecutor has proposed that the Bulgarian accused should be acquitted for lack of proof. I dissent from that proposal. It is not enough; it would not completely clear us from suspicion. The truth is that this trial has proved absolutely conclusively that we had nothing whatsoever to do with the fire and that there is not the slightest ground to entertain further suspicions against us. We Bulgarians, and Torgler too, must all be acquitted, not for lack of proof, but because we, as Communists, neither have nor could have anything to do with an anti-Communist deed.

I therefore propose the following verdict:

1. That Torgler, Popov, Tanev and myself be pronounced innocent and that the indictment be quashed as ill-founded;
2. That van der Lubbe should be declared to be the misused tool of the enemies of the working class;

3. That those responsible for the false charges against us should be made criminally liable for them;

4. That we should be compensated for the losses which we have sustained through this trial, for our wasted time, our damaged health and for the sufferings which we have undergone.

A time will come when these accounts will have to be settled, with interest! The elucidation of the Reichstag fire and the identification of the real incendiaries is a task which will fall to the people's Court of the future proletarian dictatorship.

When Galileo was condemned he declared:

“E pur si muove!”

No less determined than old Galileo we Communists declare to-day: “E pur si muove!” The wheel of history moves on towards the ultimate, inevitable, irrepressible goal of Communism . . .

(The Court forbade Dimitrov to speak further.)

*December, 1933*



## SOLDIER OF THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

### STATEMENT ON ARRIVAL IN MOSCOW

The first thing that we must say — is the unbounded gratitude which we feel to the international proletariat, to the widest sections of the workers in every country, to the honest intellectuals, who fought for our freedom. And above all, our warmest thanks to the workers and collective farmers of the Soviet country, of *our* country.

I can state with full conviction: without this admirable mobilisation of public opinion in our defence we should certainly not have been in a position to be talking to you here. German fascism had determined to destroy us morally and physically.

Unfortunately it was only very late that my comrades and I learned of the magnificent campaign which was conducted throughout the whole world for our release. It is only now, a few hours after our arrival here, that we have learnt in conversation with the comrades much of what was happening around us all through this time.

I am firmly convinced that this campaign has not merely saved us, the three Bulgarians and Torgler, but that we have also to thank it for the fact that the provocation by German fascism, which aimed at the destruction of many thousands of workers, was brought to nothing. This campaign deprived the fascists of the possibility of setting further provocation going for the extermination of the leading cadres of the revolutionary proletariat in Germany.

In short, *the trial was a provocation*, just as the burning of the Reichstag was a provocation. The trial was intended to conceal the incendiaries. The object was to shift the blame onto other people. But, in accordance with the laws of dialectic, the laws of the class struggle of the proletariat, the trial turned into its opposite. The anti-Communist trial was transformed into a magnificent anti-fascist demonstration and a shameful fiasco for fascism. The fire was intended to convince the German people that Communists were incendiaries, the trial convinced the German people that this was a myth.

In the meantime a year has passed, and although Fascist Germany —



one single prison — is isolated from the whole world, there is no one today in Germany who believes that the Communists set fire to the Reichstag. Even among the simple rank and file members of the National-Socialist Party there are many who are convinced that the Reichstag fire was the work of the fascist leaders.

We have left Germany with the greatest hatred for German fascism, but also with the greatest love, the deepest sympathy, for the German workers and Communists. Owing to our strict isolation it was impossible for us to know exactly what they have to suffer and how they are fighting. But up to the time we were in court and as we stood in the dock, we were conscious that the mighty German Communist Party was standing unshaken at its post. Loyalty, devotion to their Party, was expressed in the attitude of the working-class witnesses who had been fetched out of the concentration camps to the court. The struggle conducted for our release must be continued for the release of thousands of proletarian prisoners from the fascist barracks.

What shall I do here? That is quite clear . . . *I am a soldier of the proletarian revolution, a soldier of the Communist International.* It was with that point of view that I came before the Tribunal. I shall carry out my duty as a soldier of the proletarian revolution here, I shall also continue to carry it out up to my last breath.

*February 27, 1934*

## II

# THE SEVENTH WORLD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

## THE FASCIST OFFENSIVE AND THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

### *I FASCISM AND THE WORKING CLASS*

Comrades, as early as the Sixth Congress the Communist International warned the world proletariat that a new fascist offensive was under way and called for a struggle against it. The Congress pointed out that "in a more or less developed form, fascist tendencies and the germs of a fascist movement are to be found almost everywhere."

With the development of the very deep economic crisis, with the general crisis of capitalism becoming sharply accentuated and the mass of working people becoming revolutionised, fascism has embarked upon a wide offensive. The ruling bourgeoisie more and more seeks salvation in fascism, with the object of taking exceptional predatory measures against the working people, preparing for an imperialist war of plunder, attacking the Soviet Union, enslaving and partitioning China, and by all these means preventing revolution.

The imperialist circles are trying to shift the *whole* burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of the working people. *That is why they need fascism.*

They are trying to solve the problem of markets by enslaving the weak nations, by intensifying colonial oppression and repartitioning the world anew by means of war. *That is why they need fascism.*

They are striving to *forestall* the growth of the forces of revolution by smashing the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants and by undertaking a military attack against the Soviet Union—the bulwark of the world proletariat. *That is why they need fascism.*

In a number of countries, Germany in particular, these imperialist circles have succeeded, *before* the masses had decisively turned toward revolution in inflicting defeat on the proletariat and establishing a fascist dictatorship.

But it is characteristic of the victory of fascism that this victory, on the one hand, bears witness to the weakness of the proletariat, disorganized and paralyzed by the disruptive policy of Social-Democracy, by its class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and, on the other, expresses the weakness of the bourgeoisie itself, afraid of the realization of a united struggle of the working class, afraid of revolution, and no longer in a position to maintain its dictatorship over the masses by the old methods of bourgeois democracy and parliamentarism.

The victory of fascism in Germany, Comrade Stalin said at the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

“ . . . must be regarded not only as a symptom of the weakness of the working class and as a result of the betrayal of the working class by Social-Democracy, which paved the way for fascism; it must also be regarded as a symptom of the weakness of the bourgeoisie, as a symptom of the fact that the bourgeoisie is already unable to rule by the old methods of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy, and, as a consequence, is compelled in its home policy to resort to terroristic methods of administration—it must be taken as a symptom of the fact that it is no longer able to find a way out of the present situation on the basis of a peaceful foreign policy, and, as a consequence, it is compelled to resort to a policy of war”<sup>1</sup>.

### *The Class Character of Fascism*

Comrades, fascism in power was correctly described by the Thirteenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International as *the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialist elements of finance capital*.

The most reactionary variety of fascism is the *German type* of fascism. It has the effrontery to call itself National-Socialism, though it has nothing in

<sup>1</sup>) J. Stalin, *Report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C. P. S. U. (B.) on the Work of the Central Committee of the C. P. S. U. (B.)*



common with socialism. Hitler fascism is not only bourgeois nationalism, it is bestial chauvinism. It is a government system of political gangsterism, a system of provocation and torture practised upon the working class and the revolutionary elements of the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia. It is mediaeval barbarity and bestiality, it is unbridled aggression in relation to other nations.

German fascism is acting as *the spearhead of international counter-revolution, as the chief instigator of imperialist war, as the initiator of a crusade against the Soviet Union, the great fatherland of the working people of the whole world.*

Fascism is not a form of state power "standing above both classes—the proletariat and the bourgeoisie," as Otto Bauer, for instance, has asserted. It is not "the revolt of the petty bourgeoisie which has captured the machinery of the state," as the British Socialist Brailsford declares. No, fascism is not a power standing above class, nor a power of the petty bourgeoisie or the lumpenproletariat over finance capital. Fascism is the power of finance capital itself. It is the organization of terrorist vengeance against the working class and the revolutionary section of the peasantry and intelligentsia. In foreign policy, fascism is jingoism in its most brutal form, fomenting bestial hatred of other nations.

This, the true character of fascism, must be particularly stressed; because in a number of countries, under cover of social demagoguery, fascism has managed to gain the following of the mass of the petty bourgeoisie that has been driven out of its course by the crisis, and even of certain sections of the most backward strata of the proletariat. These would never have supported fascism if they had understood its real class character and its true nature.

The development of fascism, and the fascist dictatorship itself, assume *different forms* in different countries, according to historical, social and economic conditions and to the national peculiarities and the international position of the given country. In certain countries, principally those in which fascism has no extensive mass basis and in which the struggle of the various groups within the camp of the fascist bourgeoisie itself is rather acute, fascism does not immediately venture to abolish parliament, but allows the other bourgeois parties, as well as the Social-Democratic Parties, to retain a certain degree of legality. In other countries, where the ruling

bourgeoisie fears an *early* outbreak of revolution, fascism establishes its unrestricted political monopoly, either immediately or by intensifying its reign of terror against and persecution of all competing parties and groups. This does not prevent fascism, when its position becomes *particularly* acute, from trying to extend its basis and, without altering its class nature, trying to *combine* open terrorist dictatorship with a crude sham of parliamentarism.

The accession to power of fascism is not an *ordinary succession* of one bourgeois government by another, but a *substitution* of one state form of class domination of the bourgeoisie—bourgeois democracy—by another form—open terrorist dictatorship. It would be a serious mistake to ignore this distinction, a mistake which would prevent the revolutionary proletariat from mobilizing the widest strata of the working people of town and country for the struggle against the menace of the seizure of power by the fascists, and from taking advantage of the contradictions which exist in the camp of the bourgeoisie itself. But it is a mistake, no less serious and dangerous, to *underrate* the importance, for the establishment of fascist dictatorship, of the *reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie at present increasingly developing in bourgeois-democratic countries* — measures which suppress the democratic liberties of the working people, falsify and curtail the rights of parliament and intensify the repression of the revolutionary movement.

Comrades, the accession to power of fascism must not be conceived of in so simplified and smooth a form, as though some committee or other of finance capital decided on a certain date to set up a fascist dictatorship. In reality, fascism usually comes to power in the course of a mutual, and at times severe, struggle against the old bourgeois parties, or a definite section of these parties, in the course of a struggle even within the fascist camp itself—a struggle which at times leads to armed clashes, as we have witnessed in the case of Germany, Austria and other countries. All this, however, does not make less important the fact that, before the establishment of a fascist dictatorship, bourgeois governments usually pass through a number of preliminary stages and adopt a number of reactionary measures which directly facilitate the accession to power of fascism. Whoever does not fight the reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie and the growth of fascism at these preparatory stages is *not in a position to prevent the victory of fascism, but, on the contrary, facilitates that victory.*



The Social-Democratic leaders glossed over and concealed from the masses the true class nature of fascism, and did not call them to the struggle against the increasingly reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie. They bear great *historical responsibility* for the fact that, at the decisive moment of the fascist offensive, a large section of the working people of Germany and of a number of other fascist countries failed to recognize in fascism bloodthirsty, rapacious finance capital, their most vicious enemy, and that these masses were not prepared to resist it.

What is the source of the influence of fascism over the masses? Fascism is able to attract the masses because it demagogically appeals to their *most urgent needs and demands*. Fascism not only inflames prejudices that are deeply ingrained in the masses, but also plays on the better sentiments of the masses, on their sense of justice, and sometimes even on their revolutionary traditions. Why do the German fascists, those lackeys of the big bourgeoisie and mortal enemies of socialism, represent themselves to the masses as "Socialists," and depict their accession to power as a "revolution?" "Because they try to exploit the faith in revolution and the urge toward socialism that lives in the hearts of the mass of working people in Germany.

Fascism acts in the interests of the extreme imperialists, but it presents itself to the masses in the guise of champion of an ill-treated nation, and appeals to outraged national sentiments, as German fascism did, for instance, when it won the support of the masses of the petty bourgeoisie by the slogan "Against the Versailles Treaty!"

Fascism aims at the most unbridled exploitation of the masses, but it approaches them with the most artful anti-capitalist demagogy, taking advantage of the deep hatred of the working people against the plundering bourgeoisie, the banks, trusts and financial magnates, and advancing those slogans which at the given moment are most alluring to the politically immature masses. In Germany—"The general welfare is higher than the welfare of the individual"; in Italy—"Our state is not a capitalist, but a corporate state"; in Japan—"For Japan without exploitation"; in the United States—"Share the wealth," and so forth.

Fascism places the people at the mercy of the most corrupt and venal elements, but comes before them with the demand for "an honest and



incorruptible government." Speculating on the profound disillusionment of the masses in bourgeois-democratic governments, fascism hypocritically denounces corruption (for instance, the Barmat and Sklarek affairs in Germany, the Stavisky affair in France, and numerous others).

It is in the interests of the most reactionary circles of the bourgeoisie that fascism intercepts the disappointed masses who desert the old bourgeois parties. But it impresses these masses by the *severity of its attacks* on the bourgeois governments and its irreconcilable attitude to the old bourgeois parties.

Surpassing in its cynicism and hypocrisy all other varieties of bourgeois reaction, fascism *adapts* its demagogy to the *national peculiarities* of each country, and even to the peculiarities of the various social strata in one and the same country. And the mass of the petty bourgeoisie and even a section of the workers, reduced to despair by want, unemployment and the insecurity of their existence, fall victim to the social and chauvinist demagogy of fascism.

Fascism comes to power as a *party of attack* on the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, on the mass of the people who are in a state of unrest; yet it stages its accession to power as a "revolutionary" movement against the bourgeoisie on behalf of "the whole nation" and for the "salvation" of the nation. One recalls Mussolini's "march" on Rome, Pilsudski's "march" on Warsaw, Hitler's National-Socialist "revolution" in Germany, and so forth.

But whatever the masks which fascism adopts, whatever the forms in which it presents itself, whatever the ways by which it comes to power—

*Fascism is a most ferocious attack by capital on the mass of the working people;*

*Fascism is unbridled chauvinism and predatory war;*

*Fascism is rabid reaction and counter-revolution;*

*Fascism is the most vicious enemy of the working class and of all working people!*

### *What Are the Fruits of the Victory of Fascism for the Masses?*

Fascism promised the workers "a fair wage," but actually it has brought them an even lower, a pauper standard of living. It promised work for the unemployed, but actually it has brought them even more painful torments

of starvation and forced servile labour. In practice it converts the workers and unemployed into pariahs of capitalist society stripped of rights; destroys their trade unions; deprives them of the right to strike and to have their working-class press, forces them into fascist organizations, plunders their social insurance funds and transforms the mills and factories into barracks where the unbridled arbitrary rule of the capitalist reigns.

Fascism promised the working *youth* a broad highway to a brilliant future. But actually it has brought wholesale dismissals of young workers, labour camps and incessant military drilling for a predatory war.

Fascism promised to guarantee *office workers, petty officials and intellectuals* security of existence, to destroy the omnipotence of the trusts and wipe out profiteering by bank capital. But actually it has brought them an ever greater degree of despair and uncertainty as to the morrow; it is subjecting them to a new bureaucracy made up of the most submissive of its followers, it is setting up an intolerable dictatorship of the trusts and spreading corruption and degeneration to an unprecedented extent.

Fascism promised the ruined and impoverished *peasants* to put an end to debt bondage, to abolish rent and even to expropriate the landed estates without compensation, in the interests of the landless and ruined peasants. But actually it is placing the labouring peasants in a state of unprecedented servitude to the trusts and the fascist state apparatus, and pushes to the utmost limit the exploitation of the great mass of the peasantry by the big landowners, the banks and the usurers.

"Germany will be a peasant country, or will not be at all," Hitler solemnly declared. And what did the peasants of Germany get under Hitler? The moratorium, which has already been cancelled? Or the law on the inheritance of peasant property, which leads to millions of sons and daughters of peasants being squeezed out of the villages and reduced to paupers? Farm labourers have been transformed into semi-serfs, deprived even of the elementary right of free movement. The working peasants have been deprived of the opportunity of selling the produce of their farms in the market.

And in Poland?

"The Polish peasant," says the Polish newspaper *Czas*, "employs



methods and means which were used perhaps only in the Middle Ages; he nurses the fire in his stove and lends it to his neighbour; he splits matches into several parts; he lends dirty soapwater to others; he boils herring barrels in order to obtain salt water. This is not a fable, but the actual state of affairs in the countryside, of the truth of which anybody may convince himself."

And it is not Communists who write this, comrades, but a Polish reactionary newspaper!

But this is by no means all.

Every day, in the concentration camps of fascist Germany, in the cellars of the Gestapo (German secret police), in the torture chambers of Poland, in the cells of the Bulgarian and Finnish secret police, in the "Glavnyacha" in Belgrade, in the Rumanian "Siguranza" and on the Italian islands, the best sons of the working class, revolutionary peasants, fighters for the splendid future of mankind, are being subjected to revolting tortures and indignities, before which pale the most abominable acts of the tsarist secret police. The blackguardly German fascists beat husbands to a bloody pulp in the presence of their wives, and send the ashes of murdered sons by parcel post to their mothers. Sterilization has been made a method of political warfare. In the torture chambers, imprisoned anti-fascists are given injections of poison, their arms are broken, their eyes gouged out; they are strung up and have water pumped into them; the fascist swastika is carved in their living flesh.

I have before me a statistical summary drawn up by the International Red Aid regarding the number of killed, wounded, arrested, maimed and tortured to death in Germany, Poland, Italy, Austria, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. In Germany alone, since the National-Socialists came to power, over 4,200 anti-fascist workers, peasants, employees, intellectuals—Communists, Social-Democrats and members of opposition Christian organizations—have been murdered, 317,800 arrested, 218,600 injured and subjected to torture. In Austria, since the battles of February last year, the "Christian" fascist government has murdered 1,900 revolutionary workers, maimed and injured 10,000 and arrested 40,000. And this summary, comrades, is far from complete.



Words fail me in describing the indignation which seizes us at the thought of the torments which the working people are now undergoing in a number of fascist countries. The facts and figures we quote *do not reflect one hundredth part of the true picture of* the exploitation and tortures inflicted by the White terror and forming part of the daily life of the working class in many capitalist countries. Volumes cannot give a just picture of the countless brutalities inflicted by fascism on the working people.

With feelings of profound emotion and hatred for the fascist butchers, we dip the banners of the Communist International before the unforgettable memory of John Scheer, Fiete Schulz and Luetgens in Germany, Koloman Wallisch and Muenichreiter in Austria, Sallai and Fuerst in Hungary, Kofardzhiev, Lutibrodsky and Voikov in Bulgaria—before the memory of thousands and thousands of Communists, Social-Democrats and no-party workers, peasants and representatives of the progressive intelligentsia who have laid down their lives in the struggle against fascism.

From this platform we greet the leader of the German proletariat and the honorary chairman of our Congress—Comrade Thaelmann. We greet Comrades Rakosi, Gramsci, Antikainen and Yonko Panov. We greet the leader of the Spanish Socialists, Caballero, imprisoned by the counter-revolutionaries; Tom Mooney, who has been languishing in prison for eighteen years, and the thousands of other prisoners of capitalism and fascism, and we say to them: "Brothers in the fight, brothers in arms, you are not forgotten. We are with you. We shall give every hour of our lives, every drop of our blood, for your liberation, and for the liberation of all working people from the shameful regime of fascism."

Comrades, it was Lenin who warned us that the bourgeoisie may succeed in overwhelming the working people by savage terror, in checking the growing forces of revolution for brief periods of time, but that, nevertheless, this would not save it from its doom.

"Life will assert itself," Lenin wrote. "Let the bourgeoisie rave, work itself into a frenzy, overdo things, commit stupidities, take vengeance on the Bolsheviks in advance and endeavour to kill off (in India, Hungary, Germany, etc.) hundreds, thousands and hundreds of thousands more of yesterday's and tomorrow's Bolsheviks. Acting thus,

the bourgeoisie acts as all classes doomed by history have acted. Communists should know that the future, at any rate, belongs to them; therefore, we can, and must, combine the most intense passion in the great revolutionary struggle with the coolest and most sober evaluation of the mad ravings of the bourgeoisie." <sup>1</sup>.

Aye, if we and the proletariat of the whole world firmly follow the path indicated by Lenin and Stalin, the bourgeoisie will perish in spite of everything.

### *Is The Victory of Fascism Inevitable?*

Why was it that fascism could triumph, and how?

Fascism is the most vicious enemy of the working class and working people. Fascism is the enemy of nine-tenths of the German people, nine-tenths of the Austrian people, nine-tenths of the other peoples in fascist countries. How, in what way, could this vicious enemy triumph?

Fascism was able to come to power *primarily* because the working class, owing to the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie pursued by the Social-Democratic leaders, *proved to be split, politically and organizationally disarmed*, in face of the onslaught of the bourgeoisie. And the Communist Parties, on the other hand, apart from and in opposition to the Social-Democrats, *were not strong enough* to rouse the masses and to lead them in a decisive struggle against fascism.

And, indeed, let the millions of Social-Democratic workers, who together with their Communist brothers are now experiencing the horrors of fascist barbarism, seriously reflect on the following: If, in 1918, when revolution broke out in Germany and Austria, the Austrian and German proletariat had not followed the Social-Democratic leadership of Otto Bauer, Friedrich Adler and Karl Renner in Austria and Ebert and Scheide-mann in Germany, but had followed the road of the Russian Bolsheviks, the road of Lenin and Stalin, there would now be no fascism in Austria or Germany, in Italy or Hungary, in Poland or in the Balkans. Not the bourgeoisie, but the working class would long ago have been the master of the situation in Europe.

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<sup>1</sup>. V. I. Lenin, "*Left Wing*" Communism, an Infantile Disorder.



Take, for example, the *Austrian* Social-Democratic Party. The revolution of 1918 raised it to a tremendous height. It held the power in its hands, it held strong positions in the army and in the state apparatus. Relying on these positions, it could have nipped fascism in the bud. But it surrendered one position of the working class after another without resistance. It allowed the bourgeoisie to strengthen its power, annul the constitution, purge the state apparatus, army and police force of Social-Democratic functionaries, and take the arsenals away from the workers. It allowed the fascist bandits to murder Social-Democratic workers with impunity and accepted the terms of the Huettenberg pact, which gave the fascist elements entry to the factories. At the same time the Social-Democratic leaders fooled the workers with the Linz program, which contained the alternative possibility of using armed force against the bourgeoisie and establishing the proletarian dictatorship, assuring them that in the event of the ruling class using force against the working class, the Party would reply by a call for general strike and for armed struggle. As though the whole policy of preparation for a fascist attack on the working class were not one chain of acts of violence against the working class masked by constitutional forms! Even on the eve and in the course of the February battles the Austrian Social-Democratic leaders left the heroically fighting Schutzbund isolated from the wide masses, and doomed the Austrian proletariat to defeat.

Was the victory of fascism inevitable in *Germany*? No the German working class could have prevented it.

But in order to do so, it should have achieved a united anti-fascist proletarian front, and forced the Social-Democratic leaders to put a stop to their campaign against the Communists and to accept the repeated proposals of the Communist Party for united action against fascism.

When fascism was on the offensive and the bourgeois-democratic liberties were being progressively abolished by the bourgeoisie, it should not have contented itself with the verbal resolutions of the Social-Democrats, but should have replied by a genuine mass struggle, which would have made the fulfilment of the fascist plans of the German bourgeoisie more difficult.

It should not have allowed the prohibition of the League of Red Front



Fighters by the government of Braun and Severing, and should have established fighting contact between the League and the Reichsbanner,<sup>1</sup> with its nearly one million members, and have compelled Braun and Severing to arm both these organizations in order to resist and smash the fascist bands.

It should have compelled the Social-Democratic leaders who headed the Prussian government to adopt measures of defence against fascism, arrest the fascist leaders, close down their press, confiscate their material resources and the resources of the capitalists who were financing the fascist movement, dissolve the fascist organizations, deprive them of their weapons and so forth.

Furthermore, it should have secured the re-establishment and extension of all forms of social assistance and the introduction of a moratorium and crisis benefits for the peasants—who were being ruined under the influence of crisis—by taxing the banks and the trusts, in this way securing for itself the support of the working peasants. It was the fault of the Social-Democrats of Germany that this was not done, and that is why fascism was able to triumph.

Was it inevitable that the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy should have triumphed in *Spain*,<sup>2</sup> a country where the forces of proletarian revolt are so advantageously combined with a peasant war?

The Spanish Socialists were in the government from the first days of the revolution. Did they establish fighting contact between the working-class organizations of every political opinion, including the Communists and the Anarchists, and did they weld the working class into a united trade union organization? Did they demand the confiscation of all lands of the landlords, the church and the monasteries in favour of the peasants in order to win over the latter to the side of the revolution? Did they attempt to fight for national self-determination for the Catalonians and the Basques, and for the liberation of Morocco? Did they purge the army of monarchist and fascist elements and prepare it for passing over to the side of the workers and peasants? Did they dissolve the Civil Guard, so de-

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<sup>1</sup>. *Reichsbanner*—"The Flag of the Realm," a Social Democratic semi-military mass organization.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>. The fighting in Asturias in 1934.—*Ed.*

tested by the people, the executioner of every movement of the people? Did they strike at the fascist party of Gil Robles and at the might of the Catholic church? No, they did none of these things. They rejected the frequent proposals of the Communists for united action against the offensive of the bourgeois-landlord reaction and fascism; they passed election laws which enabled the reactionaries to gain a majority in the Cortes (parliament), laws which penalized the popular movement, laws under which the heroic miners of Asturias are now being tried. They had peasants who were fighting for land shot by the Civil Guard, and so on.

This is the way in which the Social-Democrats, by disorganizing and splitting the ranks of the working class, cleared the path to power for fascism in Germany, Austria and Spain.

Comrades, fascism also attained power for the reason that the proletariat found itself isolated from its natural allies. Fascism attained power because it was able to win over *large masses of the peasantry*, owing to the fact that the Social-Democrats, in the name of the working class, pursued what was in fact an anti-peasant policy. The peasant saw in power a number of Social-Democratic governments, which in his eyes were an embodiment of the power of the working class; but not one of them put an end to peasant want, none of them gave land to the peasantry. In Germany, the Social-Democrats did not touch the landlords; they combated the strikes of the agricultural workers, with the result that long before Hitler came to power the agricultural workers of Germany were deserting the reformist trade unions and in the majority of cases were going over to the Stahlhelm and to the National-Socialists.

Fascism also attained power for the reason that it was able to penetrate into the ranks of the *youth*, whereas the Social-Democrats diverted the working-class youth from the class struggle, while the revolutionary proletariat did not develop the necessary educational work among the youth and did not pay enough attention to the struggle for its specific interests and demands. Fascism grasped the very acute need of the youth for militant activity, and enticed a considerable section of the youth into its fighting detachments. The new generation of young men and women has not experienced the horrors of war. They have felt the full weight of the economic crisis, unemployment and the disintegration of bourgeois democracy.



But, seeing no prospects for the future, large sections of the youth proved to be particularly receptive to fascist demagogy, which depicted for them an alluring future should fascism succeed.

In this connection, we cannot avoid referring also to a number of *mistakes committed by the Communist Parties*, mistakes that hampered our struggle against facism.

In our ranks there was an impermissible underestimation of the fascist danger, a tendency which to this day has not everywhere been overcome. Of this nature was the opinion formerly to be met with in our Parties that "Germany is not Italy," meaning that fascism may have succeeded in Italy, but that its success in Germany was out of the question, because the latter is an industrially and culturally highly developed country, with forty years of traditions of the working-class movement, in which fascism was impossible. Or the kind of opinion which is to be met with nowadays, to the effect that in countries of "classical" bourgeois democracy the soil for fascism does not exist. Such opinions have served and may serve to relax vigilance toward the fascist danger, and to render the mobilization of the proletariat in the struggle against fascism more difficult.

One might also cite not a few instances where Communists were taken unawares by the fascist coup. Remember Bulgaria, where the leadership of our Party took up a "neutral," but in fact opportunist, position with regard to the coup d'état of June 9, 1923; Poland, where, in May 1926, the leadership of the Communist Party, making a wrong estimate of the motive forces of the Polish revolution, did not realize the fascist nature of Pilsudski's coup, and trailed in the rear of events; Finland, where our Party based itself on a false conception of slow and gradual fascization and overlooked the fascist coup which was being prepared by the leading group of the bourgeoisie and which took the Party and the working class unawares.

When National-Socialism had already become a menacing mass movement in Germany, there were comrades who regarded the Bruening government as already a government of fascist dictatorship, and who boastfully declared: "If Hitler's Third Reich ever comes about, it will be six feet underground, and above it will be the victorious power of the workers."

Our comrades in Germany for a long time failed to fully reckon with the wounded national sentiments and the indignation of the masses against



the Versailles Treaty; they treated as of little account the waverings of the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie; they were late in drawing up their program of social and national emancipation, and when they did put it forward they were unable to adapt it to the concrete demands and to the level of the masses. They were even unable to popularize it widely among the masses.

In a number of countries the necessary development of a mass fight against fascism was replaced by barren debates on the nature of fascism "in general" and by a *narrow sectarian attitude* in formulating and solving the immediate political tasks of the Party.

Comrades, it is not simply because we want to dig up the past that we speak of the causes of the victory of fascism, that we point to the historical responsibility of the Social-Democrats for the defeat of the working class, and that we also point out our own mistakes in the fight against fascism. We are not historians divorced from living reality; we, active fighters of the working class, are obliged to answer the question that is tormenting millions of workers: *Can the victory of fascism be prevented, and how?* And we reply to these millions of workers: Yes, comrades, the road to fascism can be blocked. It is quite possible. It depends on ourselves—on the workers, the peasants and all working people!

Whether the victory of fascism can be prevented depends *first and foremost* on the militant activity of the working class itself, on whether its forces are welded into a single militant army combating the offensive of capitalism and fascism. By establishing its fighting unity, the proletariat would paralyze the influence of fascism over the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie of the towns, the youth and the intelligentsia, and would be able to neutralize one section of them and win over the other section.

*Second*, it depends on the existence of a strong revolutionary party, correctly leading the struggle of the working people against fascism. A party which systematically calls on the workers to retreat in the face of fascism and permits the fascist bourgeoisie to strengthen its positions will inevitably lead the workers to defeat.

*Third*, it depends on a correct policy of the working class toward the peasantry and the petty-bourgeois masses of the towns. These masses must be taken as they are, and not as we should like to have them. It is

only in the process of the struggle that they will overcome their doubts and wavering. It is only by a patient attitude toward their inevitable waverings, it is only by the political help of the proletariat, that they will be able to rise to a higher level of revolutionary consciousness and activity.

*Fourth*, it depends on the vigilance and timely action of the revolutionary proletariat. The latter must not allow fascism to take it unawares, it must not surrender the initiative to fascism, but must inflict decisive blows on it before it can gather its forces, it must not allow fascism to consolidate its position, it must repel fascism wherever and whenever it rears its head, it must not allow fascism to gain new positions. This is what the French proletariat is so successfully trying to do.

These are the main conditions for preventing the growth of fascism and its accession to power.

#### *Fascism—a Ferocious But Unstable Power*

The fascist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie is a ferocious power, but an unstable one.

What are the chief causes of the instability of the fascist dictatorship?

Fascism undertakes to overcome the disharmonies and antagonisms within the bourgeois camp, but it makes these antagonisms even more acute. Fascism tries to establish its political monopoly by violently destroying other political parties. But the existence of the capitalist system, the existence of various classes and the accentuation of class contradictions inevitably tend to undermine and explode the political monopoly of fascism. This is not the case of a Soviet country, where the dictatorship of the proletariat is also realized by a party with a political monopoly, but where this political monopoly accords with the interests of millions of working people and is increasingly being based on the construction of a classless society. In a fascist country the party of the fascists cannot preserve its monopoly for long, because it cannot set itself the aim of abolishing classes and class contradictions. It puts an end to the legal existence of bourgeois parties. But a number of them continue to maintain an illegal existence, while the Communist Party even in conditions of illegality continues to make progress, becomes steeled and tempered and leads the



struggle of the proletariat against the fascist dictatorship. Hence, under the blows of class contradictions, the political monopoly of fascism is bound to explode.

Another reason for the instability of the fascist dictatorship is that the contrast between the anti-capitalist demagoguery of fascism and its policy of enriching the monopolist bourgeoisie in the most piratical fashion makes it easier to expose the class nature of fascism and tends to shake and narrow its mass basis.

Furthermore, the victory of fascism arouses the deep hatred and indignation of the masses, helps to revolutionize them, and provides a powerful stimulus for a united front of the proletariat against fascism.

By conducting a policy of economic nationalism (autarky) and by seizing the greater part of the national income for the purpose of preparing for war, fascism undermines the whole economic life of the country and accentuates the economic war between the capitalist states. To the conflicts that arise among the bourgeoisie it lends the character of sharp and at times bloody collisions that undermine the stability of the fascist state power in the eyes of the people. A government which murders its own followers, as happened in Germany on June 30 of last year, a fascist government against which another section of the fascist bourgeoisie is conducting an armed fight (the National-Socialist *putsch* in Austria and the violent attacks of individual fascist groups on the fascist government in Poland, Bulgaria, Finland and other countries)—a government of this character cannot for long maintain its authority in the eyes of the broad mass of the petty bourgeoisie.

The working class must be able to take advantage of the antagonisms and conflicts within the bourgeois camp, but it must not cherish the illusion that fascism will exhaust itself of its own accord. Fascism will not collapse automatically. Only the revolutionary activity of the working class can help to take advantage of the conflicts which inevitably arise within the bourgeois camp in order to undermine the fascist dictatorship and to overthrow it.

By destroying the relics of bourgeois democracy, by elevating open violence to a system of government, fascism shakes democratic illusions and undermines the authority of the law in the eyes of the working people.



This is particularly the case in countries such as Austria and Spain, where the workers have taken up arms against fascism. In Austria, the heroic struggle of the Schutzbund and the Communists, in spite of its defeat, shook the stability of the fascist dictatorship from the very outset. In Spain, the bourgeoisie did not succeed in putting the fascist muzzle on the working people. The armed struggles in Austria and Spain have resulted in ever wider masses of the working class coming to realize the necessity for a revolutionary class struggle.

Only such monstrous philistines, such lackeys of the bourgeoisie, as the superannuated theoretician of the Second International, Karl Kautsky, are capable of casting reproaches at the workers, to the effect that they should not have taken up arms in Austria and Spain. What would the working-class movement in Austria and Spain look like today if the working class of these countries were guided by the treacherous counsels of the Kautskys? The working class would be experiencing profound demoralization in its ranks.

“The school of civil war,” Lenin says, “does not leave the people unaffected. It is a harsh school, and its complete curriculum *inevitably* includes the victories of the counter-revolution, the debaucheries of enraged reactionaries, savage punishments meted out by the old governments to the rebels, etc. But only downright pedants and mentally decrepit mummies can grieve over the fact that nations are entering this painful school; this school teaches the oppressed classes how to conduct civil war; it teaches how to bring about a victorious revolution; it concentrates in the masses of present-day slaves that hatred which is always harboured by the downtrodden, dull, ignorant slaves, and which leads those slaves who have become conscious of the shame of their slavery to the greatest historic exploits.”<sup>1</sup>

The triumph of fascism in Germany has, as we know, been followed by a new wave of the fascist offensive, which, in Austria, led to the provocation by Dollfuss, in Spain to the new onslaughts of counter-revolution on the

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<sup>1</sup>. V.I. Lenin “Inflammable Material in World Politics”, *Selected Works*, vol. IV.

revolutionary conquests of the masses, in Poland to the fascist reform of the constitution, while in France it spurred the armed detachments of the fascists to attempt a coup d'état in February 1934. But this victory, and the frenzy of the fascist dictatorship, called forth a counter-movement for a united proletarian front against fascism on an international scale.

The burning of the Reichstag, which served as a signal for the general attack of fascism on the working class, the seizure and spoliation of the trade unions and the other working-class organizations, the groans of the tortured anti-fascists rising from the vaults of the fascist barracks and concentration camps, are making it clear to the masses what has been the outcome of the reactionary, disruptive role played by the German Social-Democratic leaders, who rejected the proposal made by the Communists for a joint struggle against advancing fascism. These things are convincing the masses of the necessity of amalgamating all forces of the working class for the overthrow of fascism.

Hitler's victory also provided a decisive stimulus for the creation of a united front of the working class against fascism in France. Hitler's victory not only aroused in the workers a fear of the fate that befell the German workers, not only kindled hatred for the executioners of their German class brothers, but also strengthened in them the determination never in any circumstances to allow in their country what happened to the working class in Germany.

The powerful urge toward the united front in all the capitalist countries shows that the lessons of defeat have not been in vain. The working class is beginning to act in a *new way*. The initiative shown by the Communist Party in the organization of the united front and the supreme self-sacrifice displayed by the Communists, by the revolutionary workers in the struggle against fascism, have resulted in an unprecedented increase in the prestige of the Communist International. At the same time, a deep crisis is developing in the Second International, a crisis which is particularly noticeable and has particularly accentuated since the bankruptcy of German Social-Democracy.

With ever greater ease are the Social-Democratic workers able to convince themselves that fascist Germany, with all its horrors and barbarities,



is in the final analysis *the result of the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie*. These masses are coming ever more clearly to realize that the path along which the German Social-Democratic leaders led the proletariat must not be traversed again. Never has there been such ideological dissension in the camp of the Second International as at the present time. A process of differentiation is taking place in all Social-Democratic Parties. Within their ranks *two principal camps* are forming: side by side with the existing camp of reactionary elements, who are trying in every way to preserve the bloc between the Social-Democrats and the bourgeoisie, and who rabidly reject a united front with the Communists, *there is beginning to form a camp of revolutionary elements who entertain doubts as to the correctness of the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, who are in favour of the creation of a united front with the Communists, and who are increasingly coming to adopt the position of the revolutionary class struggle*.

Thus fascism, which appeared as the result of the decline of the capitalist system, in the long run acts as a factor of its *further disintegration*. Thus fascism, which has undertaken to bury Marxism, the revolutionary movement of the working class, is, as a result of the dialectics of life and the class struggle, itself leading to the *further development of the forces* that are bound to serve as its grave-diggers, the grave-diggers of capitalism.

## II. UNITED FRONT OF THE WORKING CLASS AGAINST FASCISM

Comrades, millions of workers and working people of the capitalist countries ask the question: How can fascism be prevented from coming to power and how can fascism be overthrown after it has attained power? To this the Communist International replies: *The first thing that must be done, the thing with which to begin, is to form a united front, to establish unity of action of the workers in every factory, in every district, in every region, in every country, all over the world. Unity of action of the proletariat on a national and international scale is the mighty weapon which renders the working class capable not only of successful defence but also of successful counter-attack against fascism, against the class enemy.*

### *Importance of the United Front*

Is it not clear that joint action by the supporters of the parties and

organizations of the two Internationals, the Communist and the Second International, would make it easier for the masses to repulse the fascist onslaught, and would heighten the political importance of the working class?

Joint action by the parties of both Internationals against fascism, however, would not be confined in its effects to influencing their present adherents, the Communists and Social-Democrats; it would also exert a powerful influence on the ranks of the *Catholic, Anarchist and unorganized workers, even upon those who have temporarily become the victims of fascist demagoguery.*

Moreover, a powerful united front of the proletariat would exert tremendous influence on *all other strata of the working people*, on the peasantry, on the urban petty bourgeoisie, on the intelligentsia. A united front would inspire the wavering groups with faith in the strength of the working class.

But even this is not all. The proletariat of the imperialist countries has possible allies not only in the working people of its own countries but also in the *oppressed nations of the colonies and semi-colonies*. Inasmuch as the proletariat is split both nationally and internationally, inasmuch as one of its parts supports the policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, in particular its system of oppression in the colonies and semi-colonies, a barrier is put between the working class and the oppressed peoples of the colonies and semi-colonies, and the world anti-imperialist front is weakened. Every step by the proletariat of the imperialist countries on the road to unity of action in the direction of supporting the struggle for the liberation of the colonial peoples means transforming the colonies and semi-colonies into one of the most important reserves of the world proletariat.

If finally, we bear in mind that international unity of action by the proletariat relies on the steadily growing strength of the proletarian state, the land of socialism, the Soviet Union, we see what broad perspectives are revealed by the realization of proletarian unity of action on a national and international scale.

The establishment of unity of action by all sections of the working class, irrespective of the party or organization to which they belong, is necessary *even before the majority of the working class is united in the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism and the victory of the proletarian revolution.*

Is it possible to realize this unity of action of the proletariat in the



individual countries and throughout the whole world? Yes, it is. And it is possible at this very moment. The Communist International *puts no conditions for unity of action except one, and that an elementary condition acceptable for all workers, viz., that the unity of action be directed against fascism, against the offensive of capital, against the threat of war, against the class enemy.* This is our condition.

### *The Chief Arguments of the Opponents of the United Front*

What objections can the opponents of the united front have, and what objections do they voice?

Some say: "To the Communists the slogan of the united front is merely a manoeuvre." But if this is the case, we reply, why don't you expose this "Communist manoeuvre" by your honest participation in the united front? We declare frankly: We want unity of action by the working class so that the proletariat may grow strong in its struggle against the bourgeoisie, in order that while defending today its current interests against attacking capital, against fascism, the proletariat may reach a position tomorrow to create the preliminary conditions for its final emancipation.

"The Communists attack us," say others. But listen, we have repeatedly declared: We shall not attack anyone, whether persons, organizations or parties, standing for the united front of the working class against the class enemy. But at the same time it is our duty, in the interests of the proletariat and its cause, to criticize those persons, organizations and parties that hinder unity of action by the workers.

"We cannot form a united front with the Communists, since they have a different program," says a third group. But you yourselves say that your program differs from the program of the bourgeois parties, and yet this did not and does not prevent you from entering into coalitions with these parties.

"The bourgeois-democratic parties are better allies against fascism than the Communists," say the opponents of the united front and the advocates of coalition with the bourgeoisie. But what does Germany's experience teach? Did not the Social-Democrats form a bloc with those "better" allies? And what were the results?

"If we establish a united front with the Communists, the petty bourgeoisie will take fright at the 'Red danger' and will desert to the fascists," we hear it said quite frequently. But does the united front represent a threat to the peasants, small traders, artisans, working intellectuals? No, the united front is a threat to the big bourgeoisie, the financial magnates, the Junkers and other exploiters, whose regime brings complete ruin to all these strata.

"Social-Democracy is for democracy, the Communists are for dictatorship; therefore we cannot form a united front with the Communists," say some of the Social-Democratic leaders. But are we offering you now a united front for the purpose of proclaiming the dictatorship of the proletariat? We make no such proposal now.

"Let the Communists recognize democracy, let them come out in its defence; then we shall be ready for a united front." To this we reply: We are the adherents of Soviet democracy, the democracy of the working people, the most consistent democracy in the world. But in the capitalist countries we defend and shall continue to defend every inch of bourgeois-democratic liberties, which are being attacked by fascism and bourgeois reaction, because the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat so dictate.

"But can the tiny Communist Parties contribute anything by participating in the united front brought about by the Labour Party," say, for instance, the Labour leaders of Great Britain. Remember how the Austrian Social-Democratic leaders said the same thing with reference to the small Austrian Communist Party. And what have events shown? It was not the Austrian Social-Democratic Party headed by Otto Bauer and Karl Renner that proved right, but the small Austrian Communist Party at the right moment signaled the fascist danger in Austria and called upon the workers to struggle. The whole experience of the labour movement has shown that the Communists, with all their relative insignificance in numbers, are the motive power of the militant activity of the proletariat. Besides this, it must not be forgotten that the Communist Parties of Austria or Great Britain are not only the tens of thousands of workers who are adherents of the Party, but are *parts* of the world communist movement, are *Sections of the Communist International*, whose *leading Party* is



the Party of a proletariat which has already achieved victory and rules over one-sixth of the globe.

"But the united front did not prevent fascism from being victorious in the Saar," is another objection advanced by the opponents of the united front. Strange is the logic of these gentlemen! First they leave no stone unturned to ensure the victory of fascism and then they rejoice with malicious glee because the united front which they entered into only at the last moment did not lead to the victory of the workers.

"If we were to form a united front with the Communists, we should have to withdraw from the coalition, and reactionary and fascist parties would enter the government," say the Social-Democratic leaders holding cabinet posts in various countries. Very well. Was not the German Social-Democratic Party in a coalition government? It was. Was not the Austrian Social-Democratic Party in office? Were not the Spanish Socialists in the same government as the bourgeoisie? They were. Did the participation of the Social-Democratic Parties in the bourgeois coalition governments in these countries prevent fascism from attacking the proletariat? It did not. Consequently it is as clear as daylight that participation of Social-Democratic ministers in bourgeois governments is *not* a barrier to fascism.

"The Communists act like dictators, they want to prescribe and dictate everything to us." No. We prescribe nothing and dictate nothing. We only put forward our proposals, being convinced that if realized they will meet the interests of the working people. This is not only the right but the duty of all those acting in the name of the workers. You are afraid of the "dictatorship" of the Communists? Let us jointly submit to the workers all proposals, both yours and ours, jointly discuss them together with all the workers, and choose those proposals which are most useful to the cause of the working class.

Thus all these arguments against the united front *will not stand the slightest criticism*. They are rather the flimsy excuses of the reactionary leaders of Social-Democracy, who prefer their united front with the bourgeoisie to the united front of the proletariat.

No. These excuses will not hold water. The international proletariat has experienced the suffering caused by the split in the working class, and becomes more and more convinced that *the united front, the unity of action*

*of the proletariat on a national and international scale, is at once necessary and perfectly possible.*

### *Content and Forms of the United Front*

What is and ought to be the basic content of the united front at the present stage? The defence of the immediate economic and political interests of the working class, the defence of the working class against fascism, must form the *starting point* and *main content* of the united front in all capitalist countries.

We must not confine ourselves to bare appeals to struggle for the proletarian dictatorship. We must find and advance those slogans and forms of struggle which arise from the vital needs of the masses, form the level of their fighting capacity at the present stage of development.

We must point out to the masses what they must do *today* to defend themselves against capitalist spoliation and fascist barbarity.

We must strive to establish the widest united front with the aid of joint action by workers' organizations of different trends for the defence of the vital interests of the labouring masses. This means:

*First*, joint struggle really to shift the burden of the consequences of the crisis onto the shoulders of the ruling classes, the shoulders of the capitalists, landlords—in a word, to the shoulders of the rich.

*Second*, joint struggle against all forms of the fascist offensive, in defence of the gains and the rights of the working people, against the destruction of bourgeois-democratic liberties.

*Third*, joint struggle against the approaching danger of imperialist war, a struggle that will make the preparation of such a war more difficult.

We must tirelessly prepare the working class for a *rapid change in forms and methods of struggle* when there is a change in the situation. As the movement grows and the unity of the working class strengthens, we must go further, and prepare the transition *from the defensive to the offensive against capital*, steering toward the *organization of a mass political strike*. It must be an absolute condition of such a strike to draw into it the main trade unions of the countries concerned.

Communists, of course, cannot and must not for a moment abandon



their own *independent work* of Communist education, organization and mobilization of the masses. However, to ensure that the workers find the road of unity of action, it is necessary to strive at the same time both for short-term and for long-term agreements that provide for *joint action with Social-Democratic Parties, reformist trade unions and other organizations of the working people* against the class enemies of the proletariat. The chief stress in all this must be laid on developing *mass action*, locally, *to be carried out by the local organizations* through local agreements. While loyally carrying out the conditions of all agreements made with them, we shall mercilessly expose all sabotage of joint action on the part of persons and organizations participating in the united front. To any attempt to wreck the agreements—and such attempts may possibly be made—we shall reply by appealing to the masses while continuing untiringly to struggle for restoration of the broken unity of action.

It goes without saying that the practical realization of the united front will take *various* forms in various countries, depending upon the condition and character of the workers' organizations and their political level, upon the situation in the particular country, upon the changes in progress in the international labour movement, etc.

These forms may include, for instance: coordinated joint action of the workers to be agreed upon *from case to case* on definite occasions, on individual demands or on the basis of a common platform; coordinated actions in *individual enterprises* or by *whole industries*; coordinated actions on a *local, regional, national or international scale*; coordinated actions for the organization of the *economic* struggle of the workers, for carrying out mass *political* actions, for the organization of *joint self-defence* against fascist attacks; coordinated action in rendering *aid to political prisoners and their families*, in the field of struggle against *social reaction*; joint actions in the defence of the *interests of the youth and women*, in the field of the *cooperative movement, cultural activity, sport, etc.*

It would be insufficient to rest content with the conclusion of a pact providing for joint action and the formation of contact committees from the parties and organizations participating in the united front, like those we have in France, for instance. That is only the first step. The pact is an auxiliary means for obtaining joint action, but by itself it does not con-

stitute a united front. A contact commission between the leaders of the Communist and Socialist Parties is necessary to facilitate the carrying out of joint action, but by itself it is far from adequate for a real development of the united front, for drawing the widest masses into the struggle against fascism.

The Communists and all revolutionary workers must strive for the formation of elected (and in the countries of fascist dictatorship—selected from the most authoritative participants in the united front movement) *non-party class bodies of the united front*, at the *factories*, among the *unemployed*, in the *working-class districts*, among the *small towns-folk* and in the *villages*. Only such bodies will be able to include also in the united front movement the vast masses of unorganized working people, and will be able to assist in developing mass initiative in the struggle against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and reaction, and on this basis create the necessary *broad active rank and file of the united front* and train hundreds and thousands of non-Party Bolsheviks in the capitalist countries.

Joint action of the *organized* workers is the beginning, the foundation. But we must not lose sight of the fact that the unorganized masses constitute the vast majority of workers. Thus, in France the number of organized workers—Communists, Socialists, trade union members of various trends—is altogether *about one million*, while the total number of workers is eleven million. In Great Britain there are approximately *five million* members of trade unions and parties of various trends. At the same time the total number of workers is *fourteen million*. In the United States of America about *five million workers* are organized, while altogether there are *thirty-eight million* workers in that country. About the same ratio holds good for a number of other countries. In “normal” times this mass in the main does not participate in political life. But now this gigantic mass is getting into motion more and more, is being brought into political life, comes out in the political arena.

The creation of non-partisan class bodies is the *best form* for carrying out, extending and strengthening the united front among the rank and file of the masses. These bodies will likewise be the best bulwark against any attempt of the opponents of the united front to disrupt the growing unity of action of the working class.



*The Anti-Fascist People's Front*

In mobilizing the mass of working people for the struggle against fascism, the formation of a *wide anti-fascist People's Front on the basis of the proletarian united front* is a particularly important task. The success of the whole struggle of the proletariat is closely bound up with the establishment of a fighting alliance between the proletariat, on the one hand, and the labouring peasantry and basic mass of the urban petty bourgeoisie, who together form the majority of the population even in industrially developed countries, on the other.

In its agitation fascism, desirous of winning these masses to its own side, tries to set the mass of working people in town and countryside against the revolutionary proletariat, frightening the petty bourgeoisie with the bogey of the "Red peril." We must *turn this weapon against those who wield it* and show the working peasants, artisans and intellectuals whence the real danger threatens. We must *show concretely* who it is that piles the burden of taxes and imposts on to the peasant and squeezes usurious interest out of him; who it is that, while owning the best land and every form of wealth, drives the peasant and his family from their plot of land and dooms them to unemployment and poverty. We must explain concretely, patiently and persistently who it is that ruins the artisans and handicraftsmen with taxes, imposts, high rents, and competition impossible for them to withstand; who it is that throws into the street and deprives of employment the wide masses of the working intelligentsia.

But this is *not enough*.

The fundamental, the most decisive thing in establishing the anti-fascist People's Front is *resolute action of the revolutionary proletariat* in defence of the demands of these sections of the people, particularly the working peasantry—demands in line with the basic interests of the proletariat—and in the process of struggle combining the demands of the working class with these demands.

In forming the anti-fascist People's Front, a correct approach to those organizations and parties whose membership comprises a considerable number of the working peasantry and the mass of the urban petty bourgeoisie is of great importance.

In the capitalist countries the majority of these parties and organizations, political as well as economic, are still under the influence of the bourgeoisie and follow it. The social composition of these parties and organizations is heterogeneous. They include rich peasants side by side with landless peasants, big business men alongside of petty shopkeepers; but control is in the hands of the former, the agents of big capital. This obliges us to *approach the different organizations in different ways*, taking into consideration that not infrequently the bulk of the membership does not know anything about the real political character of its leadership. Under certain conditions we can and must try to draw these parties and organizations or certain sections of them to the side of the anti-fascist People's Front, despite their bourgeois leadership. Such, for instance, is today the situation in France with the Radical Party, in the United States with various farmers' organizations, in Poland with the "Stronnictwo Ludowe," in Yugoslavia with the Croatian Peasants' Party, in Bulgaria with the Agrarian League, in Greece with the Agrarians, etc. But regardless of whether or not there is any chance of attracting these parties and organizations as a whole to the People's Front, our tactics must *under all circumstances* be directed toward drawing the small peasants, artisans, handicraftsmen, etc., among their members into the anti-fascist People's Front.

Hence, you see that in this field we must all along the line put an end to what has not infrequently occurred in our work—neglect or contempt of the various organizations and parties of the peasants, artisans and the mass of petty bourgeoisie in the towns.

### *Key Questions of the United Front in Individual Countries*

There are in every country certain *key questions* which at the present stage are agitating vast masses of the population and around which the struggle for the establishment of the united front must be developed. If these key points, or key questions, are properly grasped, it will ensure and accelerate the establishment of the united front.



## A. The United States of America

Let us take, for example, so important a country in the capitalist world as the United States of America. There millions of people have been set into motion by the crisis. The program for the recovery of capitalism has collapsed. Vast masses are beginning to abandon the bourgeois parties and are at present at the crossroads.

Embryo American fascism is trying to direct the disillusionment and discontent of these masses into reactionary fascist channels. It is a peculiarity of the development of American fascism that at the present stage it comes forward principally in the guise of an opposition to fascism, which it accuses of being an "un-American" tendency imported from abroad. In contradistinction to German fascism, which acts under anti-constitutional slogans, American fascism tries to portray itself as the custodian of the Constitution and "American democracy." It does not as yet represent a directly menacing force. But if it succeeds in penetrating to the wide masses who have become disillusioned with the old bourgeois parties it may become a serious menace in the very near future.

And what would the victory of fascism in the United States involve? For the mass of working people it would, of course, involve the unprecedented strengthening of the regime of exploitation and the destruction of the working class movement. And what would be the international significance of this victory of fascism? As we know, the United States is not Hungary, or Finland, or Bulgaria, or Latvia. The victory of fascism in the United States would vitally change the whole international situation.

Under these circumstances, can the American proletariat content itself with organizing only its class conscious vanguard, which is prepared to follow the revolutionary path? No.

It is perfectly obvious that the interests of the American proletariat demand that all its forces dissociate themselves from the capitalist parties without delay. It must find in good time ways and suitable forms to prevent fascism from winning over the wide mass of discontented working people. And here it must be said that under American conditions the creation of a mass party of working people, a "*Workers' and Farmers' Party*," might serve as such a suitable form. *Such a party would be a specific form of the*

*mass People's Front in America* and should be put in opposition to the parties of the trusts and the banks, and likewise to growing fascism. Such a party, of course, will be *neither* Socialist *nor* Communist. But it *must be* an anti-fascist party and *must not be an anti-Communist Party*. The program of this party must be directed against the banks, trusts and monopolies, against the principal enemies of the people, who are gambling on the woes of the latter. Such a party will justify its name only if it defends the urgent demands of the working class; only if it fights for genuine social legislation, for unemployment insurance; only if it fights for land for the white and black sharecroppers and for their liberation from debt burdens; only if it tries to secure the cancellation of the farmers' indebtedness; only if it fights for equal status for Negroes; only if it defends the demands of the war veterans and the interests of members of the liberal professions, small businessmen and artisans. And so on.

It goes without saying that such a party will fight for the election of its own candidates to local government, to the state legislatures, to the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Our comrades in the United States acted rightly in taking the initiative for the creation of such a party. But they still have to take effective measures in order to make the creation of such a party the cause of the masses themselves. The question of forming a "Workers' and Farmers' Party," and its program should be discussed at mass meetings of the people. We should develop the most widespread movement for the creation of such a party, and take the lead in it. In no case must the initiative of organizing the party be allowed to pass to elements desirous of utilizing the discontent of the millions who have become disillusioned in both the bourgeois parties, Democratic and Republican, in order to create a "third party" in the United States, as an anti-Communist party, a party directed against the revolutionary movement.

## B. Great Britain

In Great Britain, as a result of the mass action of the British workers, Mosley's fascist organization has for the time being been pushed into the background. But we must not close our eyes to the fact that the so-called



“National Government” is passing a number of reactionary measures directed against the working class, as a result of which conditions are being created in Great Britain, too, which will make it easier for the bourgeoisie, if necessary, to pass to a fascist regime. At the present stage, fighting the fascist danger in Great Britain means primarily fighting the “National Government” and its reactionary measures, fighting the offensive of capital, fighting for the demands of the unemployed, fighting against wage reductions and for the repeal of all those laws with the help of which the British bourgeoisie is lowering the standard of living of the masses.

But the growing hatred of the working class for the “National Government” is uniting increasingly large numbers under the slogan of the formation of a *new Labour Government* in Great Britain. Can the Communists ignore this frame of mind of the masses, who still retain faith in a Labour Government? No, comrades. We must find a way of approaching these masses. We tell them openly, as did the Thirteenth Congress of the British Communist Party, that we Communists are in favour of a Soviet government as the only form of government capable of emancipating the workers from the yoke of capital. But you want a Labour Government? Very well. We have been and are fighting hand in hand with you for the defeat of the “National Government.” We are prepared to support your fight for the formation of a new Labour government, in spite of the fact that both the previous Labour governments failed to fulfil the promises made to the working class by the Labour Party. We do not expect this government to carry out socialist measures. But *we shall present it with the demand*, in the name of millions of workers, that it defend the most essential economic and political interests of the working class and of all working people. Let us jointly discuss a common program of such demands, and let us achieve that unity of action which the proletariat requires in order to repel the reactionary offensive of the “National Government,” the attack of capital and fascism and the preparations for a new war. On this basis, the British comrades are prepared at the forthcoming parliamentary elections to cooperate with branches of the Labour Party against the “National Government,” and also against Lloyd George, who is trying in his own way in the interests of the British bourgeoisie to lure the masses into following him against the cause of the working class.

This position of the British Communists is a correct one. It will help them to set up a militant united front with the millions of members of the British trade unions and Labour Party.

While always remaining in the front ranks of the fighting proletariat, and pointing out to the masses the only right path—the path of struggle for the revolutionary overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of a Soviet government—the Communists, in defining their immediate political aims, must not attempt to leap over those necessary stages of the mass movement in the course of which the working class by its own experience outlives its illusions and passes over to Communism.

### C. France

France, as we know, is a country in which the working class is setting an example to the whole international proletariat of how to fight fascism. The French Communist Party is setting an example to all the Sections of the Communist International of how the tactics of the united front should be applied; the Socialist workers are setting an example of what the Social-Democratic workers of other capitalist countries should now be doing in the fight against fascism. The significance of the anti-fascist demonstration attended by half a million people in Paris on July 14 of this year, and of the numerous demonstrations in other French cities, is tremendous. This is not merely a United Front movement of the workers; it is the beginning of a wide general People's Front against fascism in France.

This united front movement enhances the confidence of the working class in its own forces; it strengthens its consciousness of the leading role it is playing in relation to the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie of the towns, and the intelligentsia; it extends the influence of the Communist Party among the mass of the working class and therefore makes the proletariat stronger in the fight against fascism. It is arousing in good time the vigilance of the masses in regard to the fascist danger. And it will serve as a contagious example for the development of the anti-fascist struggle in other capitalist countries, and will exercise a heartening influence on the proletarians of Germany, oppressed by the fascist dictatorship.

The victory, needless to say, is a big one; but still it does not decide the



issue of the anti-fascist struggle. The overwhelming majority of the French people are undoubtedly opposed to fascism. But the bourgeoisie is able by armed force to violate the popular will. The fascist movement is continuing to develop absolutely freely, with the active support of monopoly capital, the state apparatus of the bourgeoisie, the general staff of the French army, and the reactionary leaders of the Catholic church—that stronghold of all reaction. The most powerful fascist organization, the *Croix de Feu*, now commands 300,000 armed men, the backbone of which consists of 60,000 officers of the reserve. It holds strong positions in the police, the gendarmerie, the army, the air force and in all government offices. The recent municipal elections have shown that in France it is not only the revolutionary forces that are growing, but also the forces of fascism. If fascism succeeds in penetrating widely among the peasantry, and in securing the support of one section of the army, while the other section remains neutral, the masses of the French working people will not be able to prevent the fascists from coming to power. Comrades, do not forget the organizational weakness of the French labour movement, which facilitates fascist attack. The working class and all anti-fascists in France have no grounds for resting content with the results already achieved.

What are the tasks facing the working class in France?

*First*, to establish the united front not only in the political sphere, but also in the economic sphere, in order to organize the struggle against the capitalist offensive, and by its pressure to smash the resistance offered to the united front by the leaders of the reformist Confederation of Labour.

*Second*, to achieve trade union unity in France—united trade unions based on the class struggle.

*Third*, to enlist in the anti-fascist movement the wide mass of the peasants and petty bourgeoisie, devoting special attention in the program of the anti-fascist People's Front to their urgent demands.

*Fourth*, to strengthen organizationally and extend further the anti-fascist movement which has already developed, by the widespread creation of non-partisan elected bodies of the anti-fascist People's Front, whose influence will extend to wider masses than those in the present parties and organizations of working people in France.

*Fifth*, to force the disbanding and disarming of the fascist organizations, as being organizations of conspirators against the republic and agents of Hitler in France.

*Sixth*, to secure that the state apparatus, army and police shall be purged of the conspirators who are preparing a fascist coup.

*Seventh*, to develop the struggle against the leaders of the reactionary cliques of the Catholic church, as one of the most important strongholds of French fascism.

*Eighth*, to link up the army with the anti-fascist movement by creating in its ranks committees for the defence of the republic and the constitution, directed against those who want to utilize the army for an anti-constitutional coup d'état; not to allow the reactionary forces in France to wreck the Franco-Soviet pact, which defends the cause of peace against the aggression of German fascism.

And if in France the anti-fascist movement leads to the formation of a government which will carry on a real struggle against French fascism—not in words but in deeds—and which will carry out the program of demands of the anti-fascist People's Front, the Communists, *while remaining* the irreconcilable foes of every bourgeois government and supporters of a Soviet government, will, nevertheless, in face of the growing fascist danger, *be prepared to support such a government.*

### *The United Front and the Fascist Mass Organizations*

Comrades, the fight for the establishment of the united front in countries where the fascists are in power is perhaps the most important problem facing us. In such countries, of course, the fight is carried on under far more difficult conditions than in countries with legal labour movements. Nevertheless, all the conditions exist in fascist countries for the development of a real anti-fascist People's Front in the struggle against the fascist dictatorship, since the Social-Democratic, Catholic and other workers, in Germany, for instance, are able to realize more directly the need for a joint struggle with the Communists against the fascist dictatorship. Wide strata of the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry, having already tasted the bitter fruits of fascist rule, are growing increasingly discontented and



disillusioned, which makes it easier to enlist them in the anti-fascist Peoples' Front.

The principal task in fascist countries, particularly in Germany and Italy, where fascism has managed to gain a mass basis and has forced the workers and other working people into its organizations, consists in skilfully combining the fight against the fascist dictatorship from without with the undermining of it from within, inside the fascist mass organizations and bodies. Special methods and means of approach, suited to the concrete conditions prevailing in these countries must be learned, mastered and applied, so as to facilitate the rapid disintegration of the mass basis of fascism and to prepare the way for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship. We must learn, master and apply this, and not only shout "Down with Hitler!" and "Down with Mussolini!" Yes, learn, master and apply.

This is a difficult and complex task. It is all the more difficult in that our experience in successfully combating fascist dictatorship is extremely limited. Our Italian comrades, for instance, have already been fighting under the conditions of a fascist dictatorship for about thirteen years. Nevertheless, they have not yet succeeded in developing a real mass struggle against fascism, and therefore they have unfortunately been little able in this respect to help the Communist Parties in other fascist countries by their positive experience.

The German and Italian Communists, and the Communists in other fascist countries, as well as the Communist youth, have displayed prodigious valour; they have made and are daily making tremendous sacrifices. We all bow our heads in honour of such heroism and sacrifices. But heroism alone is not enough. Heroism must be combined with day-to-day work among the masses, with concrete struggle against fascism, so as to achieve the most tangible results in this sphere. In our struggle against fascist dictatorship it is particularly dangerous to confuse the wish with fact. We must base ourselves on the facts, on the actual concrete situation.

What is now the actual situation in Germany, for instance?

The masses are becoming increasingly discontented and disillusioned with the policy of the fascist dictatorship, and this even assumes the form of partial strikes and other actions. In spite of all its efforts, fascism has failed to win over politically the basic masses of the workers; it is losing

even its former supporters, and will lose them more and more in the future. Nevertheless, we must realize that the workers who are convinced of the *possibility* of overthrowing the fascist dictatorship, and who are already prepared to fight for it actively, are still in the minority—they consist of us, the Communists, and the revolutionary section of the Social-Democratic workers. But the majority of the working people have not yet become aware of the real, concrete possibilities and methods of overthrowing this dictatorship, and still adopt a waiting attitude. This we must bear in mind when we outline our tasks in the struggle against fascism in Germany, and when we seek, study and apply special methods of approach for the undermining and overthrow of the fascist dictatorship in Germany.

In order to be able to strike a telling blow at the fascist dictatorship, we must first find out what is its most vulnerable point. What is the Achilles' heel of the fascist dictatorship? Its social basis. The latter is extremely heterogeneous. It is made up of various classes and various strata of society. Fascism has proclaimed itself the sole representative of all classes and strata of the population: the manufacturer and the worker, the millionaire and the unemployed, the Junker and the small peasant, the big capitalist and the artisan. It pretends to defend the interests of *all* these strata, the interests of the nation. But since it is a dictatorship of the big bourgeoisie, fascism must inevitably come into conflict with its mass social basis, all the more since, under the fascist dictatorship, the class contradictions between the pack of financial magnates and the overwhelming majority of the people are brought out in greatest relief.

We can lead the masses to a decisive struggle for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship only by getting the workers who have been forced into the fascist organizations, or have joined them through ignorance, to take part in the *most elementary movements* for the defence of their economic, political and cultural interests. It is for this reason that the Communists must work in these organizations, as the best champions of the day-to-day interests of the mass of members, bearing in mind that as the workers belonging to these organizations begin more and more frequently to demand their rights and defend their interests, they inevitably come into conflict with the fascist dictatorship.

In defending the urgent and at first, the most elementary interests of the



working people in town and countryside, it is comparatively easier to find a common language not only with the conscious anti-fascists, but also with those of the working people who are still supporters of fascism, but are disillusioned and dissatisfied with its policy, and are grumbling and seeking an occasion for expressing their discontent. In general we must realize that all our tactics in countries with a fascist dictatorship must be of such a character as not to repulse the rank-and-file supporters of fascism, not to throw them once more into the arms of fascism, but to deepen the gulf between the fascist leaders and the mass of disillusioned rank-and-file followers of fascism drawn from the working sections of society.

We need not be dismayed, comrades, if the people mobilized around these day-to-day interests consider themselves either indifferent to politics or even followers of fascism. The important thing for us is to draw them into the movement, which, although it may not at first proceed openly under the slogans of the struggle against fascism, is already objectively an anti-fascist movement putting these masses into opposition to the fascist dictatorship.

Experience teaches us that the view that it is *generally impossible*, in countries with a fascist dictatorship, to come out legally or semi-legally, is harmful and incorrect. To insist on this point of view means to fall into passivity, and to renounce real mass work altogether. True, under the conditions of a fascist dictatorship, to find forms and methods of legal or semi-legal action is a difficult and complex problem. But, as in many other questions, the path is indicated by life itself and by the initiative of the masses themselves, who have already provided us with a number of examples that must be generalized and applied in an organized and effective manner.

We must very resolutely put an end to the tendency to underestimate work in the fascist mass organizations. In Italy, in Germany, and in a number of other fascist countries, our comrades tried to conceal their passivity, and frequently even their direct refusal to work in the fascist mass organizations, by putting forward work in the factories as against work in the fascist mass organizations. In reality, however, it was just this mechanical distinction which led to work being conducted very feebly, and sometimes not at all, both in the fascist mass organizations and in the factories.

Yet it is particularly important that Communists in the fascist countries should be wherever the masses are to be found. Fascism has deprived the workers of their own legal organizations. It has forced the fascist organizations upon them, and it is *there that the masses are*—by compulsion, or to some extent voluntarily. These mass fascist organizations can and must be made our legal or semi-legal field of action, where we can meet the masses. They can and must be made our legal or semi-legal starting point for the defence of the day-to-day interests of the masses. To utilize these possibilities, Communists must win elected positions in the fascist mass organizations, for contact with the masses, and must rid themselves once and for all of the prejudice that such activity is unseemly and unworthy of a revolutionary worker.

In Germany, for instance, there is a system of so-called "shop delegates." But where is it stated that we must leave the fascists a monopoly in these organizations? Cannot we try to unite the Communist, Social-Democratic, Catholic and other anti-fascist workers in the factories so that when the list of "shop delegates" is voted upon the known agents of the employers may be struck off and other candidates, enjoying the confidence of the workers, inserted in their stead? Practice has already shown that this is possible.

And does not practice also go to show that it is possible, jointly with the Social-Democratic and other discontented workers, to demand that the "shop delegates" really defend the interests of the workers?

Take the "Labour Front" in Germany, or the fascist trade unions in Italy. Is it not possible to demand that the functionaries of the "Labour Front" be elected, and not appointed; to insist that the leading bodies of the local groups report to meetings of the members of the organizations; to address these demands, following a decision by the group, to the employer, to the "guardian of labour," to higher bodies of the "Labour Front"? This is possible, provided the revolutionary workers actually work within the "Labour Front" and try to obtain posts in it.

Similar methods of work are possible and essential in other mass fascist organizations also—in the Hitler Youth Leagues, in the sports organizations, in the *Kraft durch Freude* organizations, in the *Doppo Lavoro* in Italy, in the cooperatives and so forth.



Comrades, you remember the ancient tale of the capture of Troy. Troy was inaccessible to the armies attacking her, thanks to her impregnable walls. And the attacking army, after suffering many sacrifices, was unable to achieve victory until with the aid of the famous Trojan horse it managed to penetrate to the very heart of the enemy's camp.

We revolutionary workers, it appears to me, should not be shy about using the same tactics with regard to our fascist foe, who is defending himself against the people with the help of a living wall of his cut-throats.

He who fails to understand the necessity of using such tactics in the case of fascism, he who regards such an approach as "humiliating," may be a most excellent comrade, but if you will allow me to say so, he is a windbag and not a revolutionary, he will be unable to lead the masses to the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship.

The mass movement for a united front, starting with defence of the most elementary needs, and changing its forms and watchwords of the struggle as the latter extends and grows, is growing up *outside and inside* the fascist organizations in Germany, Italy, and the other countries in which fascism possesses a mass basis. It will be the *battering ram* which will shatter the fortress of the fascist dictatorship that at present seems impregnable to many.

### *The United Front in the Countries Where the Social-Democrats are in Office*

The struggle for the establishment of the united front raises also another very important problem, the problem of the united front in countries where Social-Democratic governments, or coalition governments in which Socialists participate, are in power, as, for instance, in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Czechoslovakia and Belgium.

Our attitude of absolute opposition to Social-Democratic governments, which are governments of compromise with the bourgeoisie, is well known. But this notwithstanding, we do not regard the existence of a *Social-Democratic government* or a coalition government formed by a Social-Democratic party with bourgeois parties as an *insurmountable obstacle* for establishing a united front with the Social-Democrats on definite issues. We believe that in such a case too a united front for the defence of the vital interests of the

working people and in the struggle against fascism is quite *possible* and *necessary*. It stands to reason that in countries where representatives of Social-Democratic parties take part in the government the Social-Democratic leadership offers the strongest *resistance* to the proletarian united front. This is quite comprehensible. After all, they want to show the bourgeoisie that they, better and more skilfully than anyone else, can keep the discontented working masses under control and prevent them from falling under the influence of Communism. The fact, however, that Social-Democratic ministers are opposed to the proletarian united front can by no means justify a situation in which *the Communists do nothing to establish a united front of the proletariat*.

Our comrades in the Scandinavian countries often follow the line of least resistance, *confining themselves to propaganda exposing the Social-Democratic governments*. This is a mistake. In *Denmark*, for example, the Social-Democratic leaders have been in the government for the past ten years, and for ten years day in and day out the Communists have been reiterating that it is a bourgeois capitalist government. We have to assume that the Danish workers are acquainted with this propaganda. The fact that a considerable majority nevertheless vote for the Social-Democratic government party only goes to show that the Communists' exposure of the government by means of propaganda is *insufficient*. It does *not* prove, however, that these hundreds of thousands of workers are satisfied with all the government measures of the Social-Democratic ministers. No, they are *not satisfied* with the fact that by its so-called crisis "agreement" the Social-Democratic government assists the *big capitalists and landlords* and not the workers and poor peasants. They are not satisfied with the decree issued by the government in January 1933, which deprived the workers of the *right to strike*. They are not satisfied with the project of the Social-Democratic leadership for a dangerous *anti-democratic electoral reform* (which would considerably reduce the number of deputies). I shall hardly be in error, comrades, if I state that 99 per cent of the Danish workers *do not approve* of these political steps taken by the Social-Democratic leaders and ministers.

Is it not possible for the Communists to call upon the trade unions and Social-Democratic organizations of Denmark to discuss some of these burning issues, to express their opinions on them and come out jointly for



a proletarian united front with the object of obtaining the workers' demands? In October of last year, when our Danish comrades appealed to the trade unions to act against the reduction of unemployment relief and for the democratic rights of the trade unions, about 100 local trade union organizations joined the united front.

In *Sweden* a Social-Democratic government is in power for the third time, but the Swedish Communists have for a long time abstained from applying the united front tactics in practice. Why? Was it because they were opposed to the united front? Of course not; they were in principle for united front, for a united front *in general*, but they failed to understand in what circumstances, on what questions, in defence of what demands a proletarian united front could be successfully established, where and how to "hook on." A few months before the formation of the Social-Democratic government, the Social-Democratic Party advanced during the elections a platform containing a number of demands which would have been the very thing to include in the platform of the proletarian united front. For example, the slogans, "*Against customs duties*," "*Against militarization*," "Put an end to the policy of delay in the question of *unemployment insurance*," "Grant *adequate old age pensions*," "*Prohibit organizations like the 'Munch' corps*" (a fascist organization), "Down with *class legislation against the unions* demanded by the bourgeois parties."

Over a million of the working people of Sweden voted in 1932 for these demands advanced by the Social-Democrats, and welcomed in 1933 the formation of a Social-Democratic government in the hope that now these demands would be realized. What could have been more natural in such a situation and what would have better suited the mass of the workers than an appeal of the Communist Party to all Social-Democratic and trade union organizations to take joint action to *secure these demands advanced by the Social-Democratic Party*?

If we had succeeded in really mobilizing wide masses and in welding the Social-Democratic and Communist workers' organizations into a united front to secure these demands of the Social-Democrats themselves, there is no doubt that the *working class of Sweden* would have gained thereby. The Social-Democratic ministers of Sweden, of course, would not have been very happy over it, for in that case the government would have been com-

pelled to meet at least some of these demands. At any rate, what has happened now, when the government instead of abolishing has *raised* some of the duties, instead of restricting militarism has enlarged the military budget, and instead of rejecting any legislation directed against the trade unions has itself introduced such a bill in Parliament, would not have happened. True, on the last issue the Communist Party of Sweden carried through a good mass campaign in the spirit of the proletarian united front, with the result that in the end even the Social-Democratic parliamentary fraction felt constrained to vote against the government bill, and for the time it has fallen through.

The *Norwegian* Communists were right in calling upon the organizations of the Labour Party to organize joint May Day demonstrations and in putting forward a number of demands which in the main coincide with the demands contained in the election platform of the Norwegian Labour Party. Although this step in favour of a united front was poorly prepared and the leadership of the Norwegian Labour Party opposed it, *united front demonstrations took place in thirty localities*.

Formerly many Communists used to be afraid it would be opportunism on their part if they did not counter every partial demand of the Social-Democrats by demands of their own which were twice as radical. That was a naive mistake. If Social-Democrats, for instance, demanded the dissolution of the fascist organizations, there was no reason why we should add: "and the disbanding of the state police" (a demand which would be expedient under different circumstances). We should rather tell the Social-Democratic workers: We are ready to accept these demands of your Party as demands of the proletarian united front and are ready to fight to the end for their realization. Let us join hands for the battle.

In *Czechoslovakia* also certain demands advanced by the Czech and German Social-Democrats, and by the reformist trade unions, can and should be utilized for establishing a united front of the working class. When the Social-Democrats, for instance, demand work for the unemployed or the abolition of the laws restricting municipal self-government, as they have done ever since 1927, these demands should be made concrete in each locality, in each district, and a fight should be carried on hand in hand with the Social-Democratic organizations for their actual realization. Or,



when the Social-Democratic Parties thunder "in general terms" against the agents of fascism in the state apparatus, the proper thing to do is in each particular district to drag into the light of day the particular local fascist spokesmen, and together with the Social-Democratic workers demand their removal from government employ.

In *Belgium* the leaders of the Socialist Party, with Emile Vandervelde at their head, have entered a coalition government. This "success" they have achieved thanks to their lengthy and extensive campaigns for two main demands: (1) *the abolition of the emergency decrees*, and (2) *the realization of the de Man plan*. The first issue is very important. The preceding government issued 150 reactionary emergency decrees, which are an extremely heavy burden on the working people. It was proposed to repeal them at once. Such was the demand of the Socialist Party. But have many of these emergency decrees been repealed by the new government? It has not rescinded a single one. It has only mollified somewhat a few of the emergency decrees in order to make a sort of "token payment" in settlement of the generous promises of the Belgian Socialist leaders (like that "token dollar" which some European powers proffered the U.S.A. in payment of the millions due as war debts).

As regards the realization of the widely advertised de Man plan, the matter has taken a turn quite unexpected by the Social-Democratic masses. The Socialist ministers announced that the *economic crisis must be overcome first*, and only those provisions of the de Man plan should be carried into effect which improve the position of the industrial capitalists and the banks; only afterwards would it be possible to adopt measures to improve the conditions of the workers. But *how long* must the workers wait for *their* share in the "benefits" promised them in the de Man plan? The Belgian *bankers* have already had their veritable *shower of gold*. The Belgian franc has been devalued 28 per cent; by this manipulation the bankers were able to pocket 4,500,000,000 francs as their spoils at the expense of the wage earners and the savings of the small depositors. But how does this tally with the contents of the de Man plan? Why, if we are to believe the letter of the plan, it promises to "*prosecute monopolist abuses and speculative manipulations.*"

On the basis of the de Man plan, the government has appointed a

commission to supervise the banks. But the commission *consists of bankers* who can now gaily and lightheartedly supervise themselves.

The de Man plan also promises a number of other good things, such as a "*shortening of the working day*," "*standardization of wages*," "*a minimum wage*," "*organization of an all-embracing system of social insurance*," "*greater convenience in living conditions through new housing construction*," and so forth. These are all demands which we Communists can support. We should go to the labour organizations of Belgium and say to them: The capitalists have already received enough and even too much. Let us demand that the Social-Democratic ministers now carry out the promises they made to the workers. Let us get together in a *united front for the successful defence* of our interests. Minister Vandervelde, we support the demands on behalf of the workers contained in *your* platform; but we tell you frankly that we take these demands *seriously*, that we want action and not empty words, and therefore are uniting hundreds of thousands of workers to *struggle* for these demands!

Thus, in countries having Social-Democratic governments, the Communists, by utilizing suitable individual demands taken from the platforms of the Social-Democratic ministers as the starting point for achieving joint action with the Social-Democratic Parties and organizations, can afterwards more easily develop a campaign for the establishment of a united front on the basis of other mass demands in the struggle against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and the threat of war.

It must further be borne in mind that in general, joint action with the Social-Democratic Parties and organizations requires from Communists serious and substantiated criticism of Social-Democracy as the ideology and practice of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and untiring, comradely explanation for the Social-Democratic workers of the program and slogans of communism. In countries having Social-Democratic governments this task is of particular importance in the struggle for the united front.

### *The Struggle for Trade Union Unity*

Comrades, a most important stage in the consolidation of the united front must be the establishment of national and international trade union unity.

As you know, the splitting tactics of the reformist leaders were applied



most virulently in the trade unions. The reason for this is clear. Here their policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie found its practical culmination directly in the factories, to the detriment of the vital interests of the working class. This, of course, gave rise to sharp criticism and resistance on the part of the revolutionary workers under the leadership of the Communists. That is why the struggle between communism and reformism raged most fiercely in the trade unions.

The more difficult and complicated the situation became for capitalism, the more reactionary was the policy of the leaders of the Amsterdam unions<sup>1</sup>, and the more aggressive their measures against all opposition elements within the trade unions. Even the establishment of the fascist dictatorship in Germany and the intensified capitalist offensive in all capitalist countries failed to diminish this aggressiveness. Is it not a characteristic fact that in 1933 alone most disgraceful circulars were issued in Great Britain, Holland, Belgium and Sweden, for the expulsion of Communists and revolutionary workers from the trade unions?

In Great Britain in 1933 a circular was issued prohibiting the local branches of the trade unions from joining anti-war or other revolutionary organizations. That was a prelude to the notorious "Black Circular" of the Trade Union Congress General Council, which outlawed any trades council admitting delegates "directly or indirectly associated with Communist organizations." What is there left to be said of the leadership of the German trade unions, which applied unprecedented repressive measures against the revolutionary elements in the trade unions?

Yet we must base our tactics, not on the behaviour of individual leaders of the Amsterdam unions, no matter what difficulties their behaviour may cause the class struggle, but primarily on the question of *where the masses of workers are to be found*. And here we must openly declare that work in the trade unions is the most vital question in the work of all Communist Parties. We must bring about a real change for the better in trade union work and make the question of struggle for trade union unity the central issue.

"What constitutes the strength of Social-Democracy in the West?" asked Comrade Stalin ten years ago. Answering this question, he said:

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<sup>1</sup>. The International Federation of Trade Unions, frequently called the Amsterdam International after the seat of its central office.

“The fact that it has its support in the trade unions.

“What constitutes the weakness of our Communist Parties in the West?

“The fact that they are not yet linked with the trade unions, and that certain elements within the Communist Parties do not wish to be linked with them.

“Hence, the main task of the Communist Parties of the West at the present time is to develop the campaign for unity in the trade union movement and to bring it to its consummation; to see to it that all Communists, without exception, join the trade unions, and work there systematically and patiently to strengthen the solidarity of the working class in its fight against capital, and thus attain the conditions that will enable the Communist Parties to rely upon the trade unions”.<sup>1</sup>

Has this precept of Comrade Stalin's been followed? No, comrades, it has not.

Ignoring the urge of the workers to join the trade unions, and faced with the difficulties of working within the Amsterdam unions, many of our comrades decided to pass by this complicated task. They invariably spoke of an organizational crisis in the Amsterdam unions, of the workers deserting the unions, but failed to notice that after some decline at the beginning of the world economic crisis, these unions later began to grow again. The peculiarity of the trade union movement has been precisely the fact that the attacks of the bourgeoisie on trade union rights, the attempts in a number of countries to “coordinate” the trade unions (Poland, Hungary, etc.), the curtailment of social insurance, and the cutting of wages forced the workers, notwithstanding the lack of resistance displayed by the reformist trade union leaders, to rally still more closely around these unions, because the workers wanted and still want to see in the trade unions the militant champions of their vital class interests. This explains the fact that most of the Amsterdam unions—in France, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Sweden, Holland, Switzerland, etc.—have grown in membership during the last few years. The American Federation of Labour has also considerably increased its membership in the past two years.

Had the German comrades better understood the problem of trade

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<sup>1</sup>. J. Stalin, *The Results of the Work of the Fourteenth Conference of the Russian Communist Party*.



union work of which Comrade Thaelmann spoke on many occasions, there would undoubtedly have been a better situation in the trade unions than was the case at the time the fascist dictatorship was established. At the end of 1932 only about *ten per cent* of the Party members belonged to the free trade unions. This in spite of the fact that after the Sixth Congress of the Comintern the Communists took the lead in quite a number of strikes. Our comrades used to write in the press of the need to assign 90 per cent of our forces to work in the trade unions, but in reality activity was concentrated exclusively around the revolutionary trade union opposition, which actually sought to replace the trade unions. And how about the period after Hitler's seizure of power? For two years many of our comrades stubbornly and systematically opposed the correct slogan of fighting for the re-establishment of the free unions.

I could cite similar examples about almost every other capitalist country.

But we already have the first serious achievements to our credit in the struggle for trade union unity in European countries. I have in mind little Austria, where on the initiative of the Communist Party a basis has been created for an illegal trade union movement. After the February battles the Social-Democrats, with Otto Bauer at their head, issued the watchword: "The free unions can be re-established only after the downfall of fascism." The Communists applied themselves to the *task of re-establishing the trade unions*. Each phase of that work was a bit of the living united front of the Austrian proletariat. The successful re-establishment of the free trade unions in underground conditions was a serious blow to fascism. The Social-Democrats were at the parting of the ways. Some of them tried to negotiate with the government. Others, seeing our successes, created their own parallel illegal trade unions. But there could be only one road: *either capitulation to fascism, or toward trade union unity through joint struggle against fascism*. Under mass pressure, the wavering leadership of the parallel unions created by the former trade union leaders decided to agree to amalgamation. The basis of this amalgamation is irreconcilable struggle against the offensive of capitalism and fascism and the guarantee of trade union democracy. We welcome this fact of the amalgamation of the trade unions, which is the first of its kind since the formal split of the trade unions after the war and is therefore of *international importance*.

In France the united front has unquestionably served as a mighty impetus for achieving trade union unity. The leaders of the General Confederation of Labour have hampered and still hamper in every way the realization of unity, countering the main issue of the class policy of the trade unions by raising issues of a subordinate and secondary or formal character. An unquestionable success in the struggle for trade union unity had been the establishment of *single unions* on a local scale, embracing, in the case of the railroad workers, for instance, approximately three-quarters of the membership of both trade unions.

*We are definitely for the re-establishment of trade union unity in each country and on an international scale. We are for one union in each industry.*

*We are for one federation of trade unions in each country. We are for single international federations of trade unions organized according to industries.*

*We stand for one international of trade unions based on the class struggle. We are for united class trade unions as one of the major bulwarks of the working class against the offensive of capital and fascism. Our only condition for uniting the trade unions is: Struggle against capital, against fascism and for internal trade union democracy.*

Time does not wait. To us the question of trade union unity on a national as well as international scale is a question of the great task of uniting our class in mighty, single trade union organizations against the class enemy.

We welcome the fact that on the eve of May First of this year the Red International of Labour Unions addressed the Amsterdam International with the proposal to consider jointly the question of the terms, methods and forms of uniting the world trade union movement. The leaders of the Amsterdam International rejected that proposal, using the outworn pretext that unity in the trade union movement is possible only within the Amsterdam International, which, by the way, includes trade unions in only a part of the European countries.

But the Communists working in the trade unions must continue to struggle tirelessly for the unity of the trade union movement. The task of the Red trade unions and the R.I.L.U. is to do all in their power to hasten the achievement of a joint struggle of all trade unions against the offensive of capital and fascism, and to bring about unity in the trade union movement, despite the stubborn resistance of the reactionary



leaders of the Amsterdam International. The Red trade unions and the R.I.L.U. must receive our unstinted support along this line.

In countries where small Red trade unions exist, we recommend working for their inclusion in the big reformist unions, but demanding the right to defend their views and the reinstatement of expelled members. But in countries where big Red trade unions exist parallel with big reformist trade unions, we must work for the convening of *unity congresses* on the basis of a platform of struggle against the capitalist offensive and the guarantee of *trade union democracy*.

It should be stated categorically that any Communist worker, any revolutionary worker who does not belong to the mass trade union of his industry, who does not fight to transform the reformist trade union into a real class trade union organization, who does not fight for trade union unity on the basis of the class struggle, such a Communist worker, such a revolutionary worker, does not discharge his elementary proletarian duty.

### *The United Front and the Youth*

Comrades, I have already pointed out the role played in the victory of fascism by the drawing of the youth into the fascist organizations. In speaking of the youth, we must state frankly that we have neglected our task of drawing the masses of the working youth into the struggle against the offensive of capital, against fascism and the danger of war; we have neglected this task in a number of countries. We have underestimated the enormous importance of the youth in the fight against fascism. We have not always taken into account the special economic, political and cultural interests of the youth. We have likewise not paid proper attention to revolutionary education of the youth.

All this has been utilized very cleverly by fascism, which in some countries, particularly in Germany, has inveigled large sections of the youth onto the anti-proletarian road. It should be borne in mind that it is not only by the glamour of militarism that fascism entices the youth. It feeds and clothes some of them in its detachments, gives work to others, and even sets up so-called cultural institutions for the youth, trying in this way to imbue them with the idea that it really can and wants to feed, clothe, teach and provide work for the mass of working youth.

In a number of capitalist countries our Young Communist Leagues are still mainly sectarian organizations divorced from the masses. Their fundamental weakness is that they still try to copy the Communist Parties, to copy their forms and methods of work, forgetting that the Y.C.L. is *not a Communist Party of the youth*. They do not take sufficient account of the fact that it is an organization with its own special tasks. Its methods and forms of work, education and struggle must be adapted to the actual level and needs of the youth.

Our Young Communists have shown memorable examples of heroism in the fight against fascist violence and bourgeois reaction. But they still lack the ability to win the masses of the youth away from hostile influences by dint of stubborn, concrete work, as is evident from the fact that they have not yet overcome their opposition to work in the fascist mass organizations, and that their approach to the Socialist youth and other non-Communist youth is not always correct.

A great part of the responsibility for all this must be borne, of course, by the Communist Parties as well, for they ought to lead and support the Y.C.L. in its work. For the problem of the youth is not only a Y.C.L. problem. *It is a problem for the whole Communist movement*. In the struggle for the youth, the Communist Parties and the Y.C.L. organizations must effect a genuine decisive change. The main task of the Communist youth movement in capitalist countries is to advance boldly in the direction of bringing about the *united front*, along the path of organizing and uniting the young generation of working people. The tremendous influence that even the first steps taken in this direction exert on the revolutionary movement of the youth is shown by the examples of *France* and the *United States* during the recent past. It was sufficient in these countries to proceed to apply the united front for considerable successes to be immediately achieved. In the sphere of the international united front, the successful initiative of the committee against war and fascism in Paris in bringing about the international cooperation of all *non-fascist* youth organizations is also worthy of note in this connection.

These recent successful steps in the united front movement of the youth also show that the forms which the united front of the youth should assume must not be stereotyped, nor necessarily be the same as those met with



in the practice of the Communist Parties. The Young Communist Leagues must strive in every way to unite the forces of all non-fascist mass organizations of the youth, including the formation of various kinds of common organizations for the struggle against fascism, against the unprecedented manner in which the youth is being stripped of every right, against the militarization of the youth and for the economic and cultural rights of the young generation, in order to draw these young workers over to the side of the anti-fascist front, no matter where they may be—in the factories, the forced labour camps, the labour exchanges, the army barracks and the fleet, the schools, or in the various sports, cultural or other organizations.

In developing and strengthening the Y.C.L., our Y.C.L. members must work for the formation of anti-fascist associations of the Communist and Socialist Youth Leagues on a platform of class struggle.

### *Women and the United Front*

Comrades, nor has work among working women—among women workers, unemployed women, peasant women and housewives—been underestimated any less than work among the youth. While fascism exacts most of all from youth, it enslaves women with particular ruthlessness and cynicism, playing on the innermost feelings of the mother, the housewife, the single working woman, uncertain of the morrow. Fascism, posing as a benefactor, throws the starving family a few beggarly scraps, trying in this way to stifle the bitterness aroused, particularly among the labouring women, by the unprecedented slavery which fascism brings them. It drives working women out of industry, forcibly sends needy girls into the country, dooming them to the position of unpaid servants of rich farmers and landlords. While promising women a happy home and family life, it drives women to prostitution more than any other capitalist regime.

Communists, above all our women Communists, must remember that there cannot be a successful fight against fascism and war unless the wide masses of women are drawn into the struggle. Agitation alone will not accomplish this. Taking into account the concrete situation in each instance we must find a way of mobilizing the mass of women by work around their vital interests and demands—in a fight for their demands against high

prices, for higher wages on the basis of the principle of *equal pay for equal work*, against mass dismissals, against every manifestation of inequality in the status of women and against fascist enslavement.

In endeavouring to draw women who work into the revolutionary movement, we must not be afraid of forming separate women's organizations for this purpose, wherever necessary. The preconceived notion that the women's organizations under Communist Party leadership in the capitalist countries must be liquidated, as part of the struggle against "women's separatism" in the labour movement, has often done great harm.

It is necessary to seek out the simplest and most flexible forms, in order to establish contact and bring about cooperation in struggle between the revolutionary, Social-Democratic and progressive anti-fascist women's organizations. We must spare no pains to see that the women workers and working women in general fight shoulder to shoulder with their class brothers in the ranks of the united working-class front and the anti-fascist People's Front.

### *The Anti-Imperialist United Front*

The changed international and internal situation lends exceptional importance to the question of the *anti-imperialist* united front in all colonial and semi-colonial countries.

In forming a wide anti-imperialist united front of struggle in the colonies and semi-colonies it is necessary above all to recognize the variety of conditions in which the anti-imperialist struggle of the masses is proceeding, the varying degree of maturity of the national liberation movement, the role of the proletariat within it and the influence of the Communist Party over the masses.

In Brazil the problem differs from that in India, China, etc.

In *Brazil* the Communist Party, having laid a correct foundation for the development of the united anti-imperialist front by the establishment of the National Liberation Alliance, must make every effort to extend this front by drawing into it first and foremost the many millions of the peasantry, leading up to the formation of units of a people's revolutionary army, completely devoted to the revolution and to the establishment of the rule of the National Liberation Alliance.



In *India* the Communists must support, extend and participate in all anti-imperialist mass activities, not excluding those which are under national reformist leadership. While maintaining their political and organizational independence, they must carry on active work inside the organizations which take part in the Indian National Congress, facilitating the process of crystallization of a national revolutionary wing among them, for the purpose of further developing the national liberation movement of the Indian peoples against British imperialism.

In *China*, where the people's movement has already led to the formation of Soviet districts over a considerable territory of the country and to the organization of a powerful Red Army, the predatory attack of Japanese imperialism and the treason of the Nanking government have brought into jeopardy the national existence of the great Chinese people. The Chinese Soviets act as a unifying centre in the struggle against the enslavement and partition of China by the imperialists, as a unifying centre which will rally all anti-imperialist forces for the national defence of the Chinese people.

We therefore approve the initiative taken by our courageous brother Party of China in the creation of a most extensive anti-imperialist united front against Japanese imperialism and its Chinese agents, jointly with all those organized forces existing on the territory of China which are ready to wage a real struggle for the salvation of their country and their people.

I am sure that I express the sentiments and thoughts of our entire Congress in saying that we send our warmest fraternal greetings, in the name of the revolutionary proletariat of the whole world, to all the Soviets of China, to the Chinese revolutionary people. We send our ardent fraternal greetings to the heroic Red Army of China, tried in a thousand battles. And we assure the Chinese people of our firm resolve to support its struggle for its complete liberation from all imperialist robbers and their Chinese henchmen.

#### *On the United Front Government*

Comrades, we have taken a bold, resolute course toward the united front of the working class, and are ready to carry it out with full consistency.

If we Communists are asked whether we advocate the united front *only* in the fight for partial demands, or whether we are prepared to share the responsibility even when it will be a question of forming a *government* on the basis of the united front, then we say with a full sense of our responsibility: Yes, we recognize that a situation may arise in which the formation of a *government of the proletarian united front*, or of an *anti-fascist People's Front*, will become not only possible but necessary in the interests of the proletariat. And in that case we shall declare for the formation of such a government without the slightest hesitation.

I am not speaking here of a government which may be formed *after* the victory of the proletarian revolution. It is not impossible, of course, that in some country, immediately after the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie, there may be formed a Soviet government on the basis of a government bloc of the Communist Party with a definite party (or its Left wing) participating in the revolution. After the October Revolution the victorious Party of the Russian Bolsheviks, as we know, included representatives of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in the Soviet government. This was a specific feature of the first Soviet government after the victory of the October Revolution.

I am not speaking of such a case, but of the possible formation of a united front government on the eve of and before the victory of the Soviet revolution.

What kind of government is this? And in what situation could there be any question of such a government?

It is primarily a *government of struggle against fascism and reaction*. It must be a government arising as the result of the united front movement and in no way restricting the activity of the Communist Party and the mass organizations of the working class, but, on the contrary, taking resolute measures against the counter-revolutionary financial magnates and their fascist agents.

At a suitable moment, relying on the growing united front movement, the Communist Party of a given country will declare for the formation of such a government on the basis of a definite anti-fascist platform.

Under what objective conditions will it be possible to form such a government? In the most general terms, one can reply to this question



as follows: under conditions of *political crisis*, when the ruling classes are no longer able to cope with the powerful rise of the mass anti-fascist movement. But this is only a general perspective, without which it will scarcely be possible in practice to form a united front government. Only the existence of definite *special prerequisites* can put on the order of the day the question of forming such a government as a politically *essential* task. It seems to me that the following prerequisites deserve the greatest attention in this connection:

First, the state apparatus of the bourgeoisie must already be sufficiently *disorganized* and *paralyzed*, so that the bourgeoisie cannot prevent the formation of a government of struggle against reaction and fascism.

Second, the widest masses of working people, particularly the mass trade unions, must be in a state of vehement revolt *against fascism and reaction, though not ready* to rise in insurrection so as to *fight under Communist Party leadership for the achievement of Soviet power*.

Third, the differentiation and radicalization in the ranks of Social-Democracy and other parties participating in the united front must already have reached the point where a considerable proportion of them demand *ruthless measures against the fascists and other reactionaries*, struggle together with the Communists against fascism and openly come out against that reactionary section of their own party which is hostile to communism.

When and in what countries a situation will actually arise in which these prerequisites will be present in a sufficient degree, it is impossible to state in advance. But as such a possibility is *not to be ruled out in any of the capitalist countries* we must reckon with it, and not only orientate and prepare ourselves but also orientate the working class accordingly.

The fact that we are bringing up this question for discussion at all today is, of course, connected with our estimate of the situation and immediate prospects, as well as with the actual growth of the united front movement in a number of countries during the recent past. For more than ten years the situation in the capitalist countries was such that it was not necessary for the Communist International to discuss a question of this kind.

You remember, comrades, that at our Fourth Congress, in 1922, and again at the Fifth Congress, in 1924, the question of the slogan of a *workers'*, or a *workers' and peasants' government* was under discussion. Originally the

issue turned essentially upon a question which was almost comparable to the one we are discussing today. The debates that took place at that time in the Communist International around this question, and in particular the political *errors* which were committed in connection with it, have to this day retained their importance for *sharpening our vigilance against the danger of deviations to the Right or "Left" from the Bolshevik line on this question*. Therefore I shall briefly point to a few of these errors, in order to draw from them the lessons necessary for the present policy of our Parties.

The *first* series of mistakes arose from the fact that the question of a workers' government was not clearly and firmly bound up with the existence of a political crisis. Owing to this the Right opportunists were able to interpret matters as though we should strive for the formation of a workers' government, supported by the Communist Party, in any, so to speak, "normal" situation. The ultra-Lefts, on the other hand, recognized only a workers' government formed by armed insurrection, *after* the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. Both views were wrong. In order, therefore, to avoid a repetition of such mistakes, we now lay *great stress on the exact consideration* of the specific, concrete circumstances of the political crisis and the upsurge of the mass movement, in which the formation of a united front government may prove possible and politically necessary.

The *second* series of errors arose from the fact that the question of a workers' government was not bound up with the development of a militant mass *united front movement of the proletariat*. Thus the *Right* opportunists were able to distort the question, reducing it to the unprincipled tactics of forming blocs with Social-Democratic Parties on the basis of purely parliamentary arrangements. The *ultra-Lefts*, on the other hand, shouted: "No coalitions with the counter-revolutionary Social-Democrats!", regarding all Social-Democrats as counter-revolutionaries at bottom.

Both were wrong, and we now emphasize, on the one hand, that we are not in the least anxious for a "workers' government" that would be nothing more nor less than an enlarged Social-Democratic government. We even prefer not to use the term "workers' governments," and *speak of a united front government*, which in political character is something absolutely different, *different in principle*, from all the Social-Democratic governments which usually call themselves "workers' (or labour) governments."



While the Social-Democratic government is an instrument of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie in the interests of the preservation of the capitalist order, *a united front government* is an instrument of the collaboration of the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat with other anti-fascist parties, in the interests of the entire working population, a government of struggle against fascism and reaction. Obviously there is a *radical difference* between these two things.

On the other hand, we stress the need to see *the difference between the two different camps of Social-Democracy*. As I have already pointed out, there is a reactionary camp of Social-Democracy, but alongside of it there exists and is growing the camp of the Left Social-Democrats (without quotation marks), of workers who are becoming revolutionary. In practice the decisive difference between them consists in their attitude to the united front of the working class. The reactionary Social-Democrats are *against* the united front; they slander the united front movement, they sabotage and disintegrate it, as it undermines their policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie. The Left Social-Democrats are *for the united front*; they defend, develop and strengthen the united front movement. Inasmuch as this united front movement is a militant movement against fascism and reaction, it will be a constant driving force, impelling the united front government to struggle against the reactionary bourgeoisie. The more powerful this mass movement develops, the greater the force which it can offer to the government to combat the reactionaries. And the better this mass movement will be organized *from below*, the wider the network of *non-party class organs of the united front in the factories, among the unemployed, in the workers' districts, among the small people of town and country*, the greater will be the guarantee against a possible degeneration of the policy of the united front government.

The *third* series of mistaken views which came to light during our former debates touched precisely on the *practical policy* of the "*workers' government*." The Right opportunists considered that a "*workers' government*" ought to keep "*within the framework of bourgeois democracy*," and consequently ought not to take any steps going beyond this framework. The ultra-Lefts, on the other hand, in practice refused to make any attempt to form a united front government.

In 1923 Saxony and Thuringia presented a clear picture of a Right opportunist "workers' government" in action. The entry of the Communists into the government of Saxony jointly with the Left Social-Democrats (Zeigner group) was no mistake in itself; on the contrary, the revolutionary situation in Germany fully justified this step. But in taking part in the government, the Communists should have used their positions primarily *for the purpose of arming the proletariat*. This they did not do. They did not even requisition a single apartment of the rich, although the housing shortage among the workers was so great that many of them with their wives and children were still without a roof over their heads. They also did *nothing* to organize the revolutionary mass movement of the workers. They behaved in general like *ordinary* parliamentary ministers "within the framework of bourgeois democracy." As you know, this was the result of the opportunist policy of Brandler and his adherents. The result was such bankruptcy that to this day we have to refer to the government of Saxony as the classical example of how revolutionaries should *not* behave when in office.

Comrades, we demand an entirely different policy from any united front government. We demand that it should carry out definite and *fundamental revolutionary demands* required by the situation. For instance, control of production, control of the banks, disbanding of the police and its replacement by an armed workers' militia, etc.

Fifteen years ago Lenin called upon us to focus all our attention on "searching out forms of *transition* or *approach* to the proletarian revolution." It may be that in a number of countries the *united front government* will prove to be *one* of the most important transitional forms. "Left" doctrinaires have always avoided this precept of Lenin's. Like the limited propagandists that they were, they spoke only of "aims," without ever worrying about "forms of transition." The Right opportunists, on the other hand, have tried to establish a special "democratic intermediate stage" lying between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the purpose of instilling into the workers the illusion of a peaceful parliamentary passage from the one dictatorship to the other. This fictitious "intermediate stage" they have also called "transitional form," and even quoted Lenins' words! But this piece of swindling was

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not difficult to expose: for Lenin spoke of the form of transition and approach to the "*proletarian revolution*," that is, to the overthrow of the bourgeois dictatorship, and *not* of some transitional form *between* the bourgeois and the proletarian dictatorship.

Why did Lenin attach such exceptionally great importance to the form of transition to the proletarian revolution? Because he had in mind "*the fundamental law of all great revolutions*," the law that for the masses propaganda and agitation alone cannot take the place of *their own political experience*, when it is a question of attracting really wide masses of the working people to the side of the revolutionary vanguard, without which a victorious struggle for power is impossible. It is a common mistake of a "Leftist" character to imagine that as soon as a political (or revolutionary) crisis arises, it is enough for the Communist leaders to put forth the slogan of revolutionary insurrection, and the wide masses will follow them. No, even in such a crisis the masses are by no means always ready to do so. We saw this in the case of *Spain*. To help the *millions* to master as rapidly as possible, through their own experience, what they have to do, where to find a radical solution, and what Party is worthy of their confidence—these among others are the purposes for which both transitional slogans and special "forms of transition or approach to the proletarian revolution" are necessary. Otherwise the great mass of the people, who are under the influence of petty-bourgeois democratic illusions and traditions, may waver even when there is a revolutionary situation, may procrastinate and stray, without finding the road to revolution—and then come under the axe of the fascist executioners.

That is why we indicate the possibility of forming an anti-fascist united front government in the conditions of a political crisis. In so far as such a government will really prosecute the struggle against the enemies of the people, and give a free hand to the working class and the Communist Party, we Communists shall accord it our unstinted support, and as soldiers of the revolution shall take our place in the *first line of fire*. But we state frankly to the masses:

*Final salvation* this government *cannot bring*. It is not in a position to overthrow the class rule of the exploiters, and for this reason cannot finally remove the danger of fascist counter-revolution. Consequently it

is necessary to *prepare for the socialist revolution!* Soviet power and *only* Soviet power can bring salvation!

In estimating the present development of the world situation, we see that a *political crisis* is maturing in quite a number of countries. This makes a firm decision by our Congress on the question of a united front government a matter of great urgency and importance.

If our parties are able to utilize in a Bolshevik fashion the opportunity of forming a united front government and of waging the struggle for formation and maintenance in power of such a government, *for the revolutionary training of the masses*, this will be *the best political justification* of our policy in favour of the formation of united front governments.

### *The Ideological Struggle Against Fascism*

One of the weakest aspects of the anti-fascist struggle of our Parties is that they *react inadequately and too slowly to the demagogy of fascism*, and to this day continue to neglect the problems of the struggle against fascist ideology. Many comrades did not believe that so reactionary a variety of bourgeois ideology as the ideology of fascism, which in its stupidity frequently reaches the point of lunacy, was capable of gaining a mass influence at all. This was a great mistake. The putrefaction of capitalism penetrates to the innermost core of its ideology and culture, while the desperate situation of wide masses of the people renders certain sections of them susceptible to infection from the ideological refuse of this putrefaction.

Under no circumstances must we underrate fascism's power of ideological infection. On the contrary, we for our part must develop an extensive ideological struggle based on clear, popular arguments and a correct, well thought out approach to the peculiarities of the national psychology of the masses of the people.

The fascists are rummaging through the entire history of every nation so as to be able to pose as the heirs and continuators of all that was exalted and heroic in its past, while all that was degrading or offensive to the national sentiments of the people they make use of as weapons against the enemies of fascism. Hundreds of books are being published in Germany with only one aim—to falsify the history of the German people and give it a fascist complexion.



The new-baked National-Socialist historians try to depict the history of Germany as if for the past two thousand years, by virtue of some historical law, a certain line of development had run through it like a red thread, leading to the appearance on the historical scene of a national "saviour," a "Messiah," of the German people, a certain "Corporal" of Austrian extraction! In these books the greatest figures of the German people of the past are represented as having been fascists, while the great peasant movements are set down as the direct precursors of the fascist movement.

Mussolini makes every effort to make capital for himself out of the heroic figure of Garibaldi. The French fascists bring to the fore as their heroine Joan of Arc. The American fascists appeal to the traditions of the American War of Independence, the traditions of Washington and Lincoln. The Bulgarian fascists make use of the national liberation movement of the seventies and its heroes beloved by the people, Vassil Levsky, Stephen Karaj and others.

Communists who suppose that all this has nothing to do with the cause of the working class, who do nothing to enlighten the masses on the past of their people, in a historically correct fashion, in a genuinely Marxist, a Leninist-Marxist, a Leninist-Stalinist spirit, who do nothing to *link up the present struggle with the people's revolutionary traditions and past*—voluntarily hand over to the fascist falsifiers all that is valuable in the historical past of the nation, that the fascists may dupe the masses.

No, comrades, *we are concerned with every important question, not only of the present and the future, but also of the past of our own peoples.* We Communists do not pursue a narrow policy based on the craft interests of the workers. We are not narrow-minded trade union functionaries, or leaders of mediaeval guilds of handicraftsmen and journeymen. We are the representatives of the class interests of the most important, the greatest class of modern society—the working class, to whose destiny it falls to free mankind from the sufferings of the capitalist system, the class which in one-sixth of the world has already cast off the yoke of capitalism and constitutes the ruling class. We defend the vital interests of all the exploited, toiling strata, that is, of the overwhelming majority in any capitalist country.

We Communists are the *irreconcilable opponents, on principle*, of bourgeois nationalism in all its forms. But we are *not supporters of national nihilism*, and should never act as such. The task of educating the workers and all working people in the spirit of proletarian internationalism is one of the fundamental tasks of every Communist Party. But anyone who thinks that this permits him, or even compels him, to sneer at all the national sentiments of the wide masses of working people is far from being a genuine Bolshevik, and has understood nothing of the teaching of Lenin and Stalin on the national question.

Lenin, who always fought bourgeois nationalism resolutely and consistently, gave us an example of the correct approach to the problem of national sentiments in his article "On the National Pride of the Great Russians," written in 1914. He wrote:

"Are we class-conscious Great-Russian proletarians impervious to the feeling of national pride? Certainly not! We love our language and our motherland; we, more than any other group, are working to raise *its* labouring masses (*i.e.*, nine-tenths of *its* population) to the level of intelligent democrats and Socialists. We, more than anybody, are grieved to see and feel to what violence, oppression and mockery our beautiful motherland is being subjected by the tsarist hangmen, the nobles and the capitalists. We are proud of the fact that those acts of violence met with resistance in our midst, in the midst of the Great Russians; that *this midst* advanced Radischev, the Decembrists, the *déclassé* revolutionaries of the 'seventies; that in 1905 the Great-Russian working class created a powerful revolutionary party of the masses . . . We are filled with national pride because of the knowledge that the Great-Russian nation, *too*, has created a revolutionary class; that it, *too*, has proven capable of giving humanity great examples of struggle for freedom and for socialism; that its contribution is not confined solely to great pogroms, numerous scaffolds, torture chambers, great famines and great servility before the priests, the tsars, the landowners and the capitalists.

"We are filled with national pride, and therefore we *particularly* hate our slavish past . . . and our slavish present, in which the same landowners, aided by the capitalists, lead us into war to stifle Poland and the Ukraine,



to throttle the democratic movement in Persia and in China, to strengthen the gang of Romanovs, Bobrinskys, Purishkeviches that cover with shame our Great-Russian national dignity." <sup>1</sup>

This is what Lenin wrote on national pride.

I think, comrades, that when the fascists, at the Leipzig trial, attempted to slander the Bulgarians as a barbarian people, I was not wrong in taking up the defence of the national honour of the working masses of the Bulgarian people, who are struggling heroically against the fascist usurpers, the real barbarians and savages, nor was I wrong in declaring that I had no cause to be ashamed of being a Bulgarian, but that, on the contrary, I was proud of being a son of the heroic Bulgarian working class.

Comrades, proletarian internationalism must, so to speak, "acclimatize itself" in each country in order to sink deep roots in its native land. *National forms* of the proletarian class struggle and of the labour movement in the individual countries are in no contradiction to proletarian internationalism; on the contrary, it is precisely in these forms that the *international interests* of the proletariat can be successfully defended.

It goes without saying that it is necessary *everywhere and on all occasions* to expose before the masses and prove to them concretely that the fascist bourgeoisie, on the pretext of defending general national interests, is conducting its egotistical policy of oppressing and exploiting its own people, as well as robbing and enslaving other nations. But we must not *confine ourselves* to this. We must at the same time prove by the very struggle of the working class and the actions of the Communist Parties that the proletariat, in rising against every manner of bondage and national oppression, is the *only* true fighter for national freedom and the independence of the people.

The interests of the class struggle of the proletariat against its native exploiters and oppressors are not in contradiction to the interests of a free and happy future of the nation. On the contrary, the socialist revolution will signify the *salvation of the nation* and will open up to it the road to loftier heights. By *the very fact* of building at the present time its class organizations and consolidating its positions, by the very fact of defending

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<sup>1</sup>. V. I. Lenin, *Collected works*, Russian edition, Vol. XVIII.

democratic rights and liberties against fascism, by the very fact of fighting for the overthrow of capitalism, the working class is fighting for the future of the nation.

The revolutionary proletariat is fighting to save the culture of the people, to liberate it from the shackles of decaying monopoly capitalism, from barbarous fascism, which is laying violent hands on it. *Only* the proletarian revolution can avert the destruction of culture and raise it to its highest flowering as a truly national culture—*national in form and socialist in content*—which, under Stalin's leadership, is being realized in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics before our very eyes.

Proletarian internationalism not only is not in contradiction to this struggle of the working people of the individual countries for national, social and cultural freedom, but, thanks to international proletarian solidarity and fighting unity, assures the *support* that is necessary for victory in this struggle. The working class in the capitalist countries can triumph *only in closest alliance* with the victorious proletariat of the great Soviet Union. *Only* by struggling hand in hand with the proletariat of the imperialist countries can the colonial peoples and oppressed national minorities achieve their freedom. The sole road to victory for the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries lies through the revolutionary alliance of the working class of the imperialist countries with the national liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries, because, as Marx taught us, "no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations."

Communists belonging to an oppressed, dependent nation cannot combat chauvinism successfully among the people of their own nation if they *do not at the same time show* in practice, in the mass movement, that they actually struggle for the liberation of their nation from the alien yoke. And again, on the other hand, the Communists of an oppressing nation cannot do what is necessary to educate the working masses of their nation in the spirit of internationalism *without waging* a resolute struggle against the oppressor policy of their "own" bourgeoisie, for the right of complete self-determination for the nations kept in bondage by it. If they do not do this, they likewise do not make it easier for the working people of the oppressed nation to overcome their nationalist prejudices.

If we act in this spirit, if in all our mass work we prove convincingly that



we are free of both national nihilism and bourgeois nationalism, then and only then shall we be able to wage a really successful struggle against the jingo demagoguery of the fascists.

That is the reason why a correct and practical application of the Leninist-Stalinist national policy is of such paramount importance. It is *unquestionably an essential* preliminary condition for a successful struggle against chauvinism—this main instrument of ideological influence of the fascists upon the masses.

### III. CONSOLIDATION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES AND THE STRUGGLE FOR POLITICAL UNITY OF THE PROLETARIAT

Comrades, in the struggle to establish the united front the importance of the leading role of the Communist Party increases extraordinarily. Only the Communist Party is at bottom the initiator, the organizer and the driving force of the united front of the working class.

The Communist Parties can ensure the mobilization of the widest masses of working people for a united struggle against fascism and the offensive of capital *only if they strengthen their own ranks in every respect*, if they develop their initiative, pursue a Marxist-Leninist policy and apply correct, flexible tactics which take into account the actual situation and alignment of class forces.

#### *Consolidation of the Communist Parties*

In the period between the Sixth and Seventh Congresses, our Parties in the capitalist countries have undoubtedly *grown in stature and have been considerably steeled*. But it would be a most dangerous mistake to rest content with this achievement. The more the united front of the working class extends, the more will new, complex problems rise before us and the more will it be necessary for us to work on the political and organizational consolidation of our Parties. The united front of the proletariat brings to the fore an army of workers who will be able to carry out their mission if this army is headed by a leading force which will point out its aims and paths. This leading force can *only be a strong proletarian, revolutionary party*.

If we Communists exert every effort to establish a united front, we do this not for the narrow purpose of recruiting new members for the Com-

munist Parties. But we must strengthen the Communist Parties in every way and increase their membership *for the very reason* that we seriously want to strengthen the united front. The strengthening of the Communist Parties is not a narrow Party concern but the concern of the entire working class.

*The unity, revolutionary solidarity and fighting preparedness of the Communist Parties* constitute most valuable capital which belongs not only to us but to the whole working class. We have combined and shall continue to combine our readiness to march jointly with the Social-Democratic Parties and organizations to the struggle against fascism with an irreconcilable struggle against Social-Democracy as the ideology and practice of compromise with the bourgeoisie, and consequently also against any *penetration* of this ideology into our own ranks.

In boldly and resolutely carrying out the policy of the united front, we meet in our own ranks with obstacles which we must remove at all costs in the shortest possible time.

After the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, a *successful struggle was waged* in all Communist Parties of the capitalist countries *against any tendency toward an opportunist adaptation to the conditions of capitalist stabilization and against any infection with reformist and legalist illusions*. Our Parties purged their ranks of various kinds of Right opportunists, thus strengthening their Bolshevik unity and fighting capacity. Less successful, and frequently entirely lacking, was the fight against *sectarianism*. Sectarianism no longer manifested itself in primitive, open forms, as in the first years of the existence of the Communist International, but, under cover of a formal recognition of the Bolshevik theses, hindered the development of a Bolshevik mass policy. In our day this is often no longer an "*infantile disorder*," as Lenin wrote, but a *deeply rooted vice*, which must be shaken off or it will be impossible to solve the problem of establishing the united front of the proletariat and of leading the masses from the positions of reformism to the side of revolution.

In the present situation sectarianism, *self-satisfied* sectarianism, as we designate it in the draft resolution, *more than anything else* impedes our struggle for the realization of the united front: sectarianism, satisfied with its *doctrinaire narrowness*, its divorce from the real life of the masses; satisfied



with its *simplified methods* of solving the most complex problems of the working-class movement on the basis of stereotyped schemes; sectarianism which professes to know all and considers it superfluous to learn from the masses, from the lessons of the labour movement. In short, sectarianism, to which, as they say, mountains are mere stepping-stones. Self-satisfied sectarianism *will not and cannot* understand that the leadership of the working class by the Communist Party does not come of itself. The leading role of the Communist Party in the struggles of the working class must be won. For this purpose it is necessary, not to rant about the leading role of the Communists, but to *merit and win the confidence of the working masses* by everyday mass work and correct policy. This will be possible only if in our political work we Communists seriously take into account the actual level of the class consciousness of the masses, the degree to which they have become revolutionized, if we soberly appraise the actual situation, not on the basis of our wishes but on the basis of the actual state of affairs. Patiently, step by step, we must make it easier for the broad masses to come over to the Communist position. We ought never to forget the words of Lenin, who warns us as strongly as possible:

“... this is the whole point—we must *not* regard that which is obsolete *for us* as obsolete *for the class*, as obsolete *for the masses*”.<sup>1</sup>

Is it not a fact, comrades, that in our ranks there are still not a few such doctrinaire elements, who at all times and places sense nothing but danger in the policy of the united front? For such comrades the whole united front is one unrelieved peril. But this sectarian “sticking to principle” is nothing but political helplessness in face of the difficulties of directly leading the struggle of the masses.

Sectarianism finds expression *particularly* in overestimating the revolutionization of the masses, in overestimating the speed at which they are abandoning the positions of reformism, and in attempting to leap over difficult stages and the complicated tasks of the movement. In practice, methods of leading the masses have frequently been replaced by the methods of leading a narrow party group. The strength of the traditional connection between the masses and their organizations and leaders was

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<sup>1</sup>. V. I. Lenin “*Left Wing*” Communism, an Infantile Disorder.

underestimated, and when the masses did not break off these connections immediately the attitude taken toward them was just as harsh as that adopted toward their reactionary leaders. Tactics and slogans have tended to become stereotyped for all countries, the special features of the actual situation in each individual country being left out of account. The necessity of stubborn struggle in the very midst of the masses themselves to win their confidence has been ignored, the struggle for the partial demands of the workers and work in the reformist trade unions and fascist mass organizations have been neglected. The policy of the united front has frequently been replaced by bare appeals and abstract propaganda.

In no less a degree have sectarian views hindered the correct selection of people, the training and developing of *cadres connected with the masses, enjoying the confidence of the masses, cadres whose revolutionary mettle has been tried and tested in class battles, cadres capable of combining the practical experience of mass work with the staunchness of principle of a Bolshevik.*

Thus sectarianism has to a considerable extent retarded the growth of the Communist Parties, made it difficult to carry out a real mass policy, prevented our taking advantage of the difficulties of the class enemy to strengthen the positions of the revolutionary movement, and hindered the winning over of the wide mass of the proletariat to the side of the Communist Parties.

While fighting most resolutely to overcome and exterminate the last remnants of self-satisfied sectarianism, we must increase in every way our vigilance toward *Right opportunism and the struggle against it and against every one of its concrete manifestations*, bearing in mind that the danger of Right opportunism will increase in proportion as the wide united front develops. Already there are tendencies to reduce the role of the Communist Party in the ranks of the united front and to effect a reconciliation with Social-Democratic ideology. Nor must we lose sight of the fact that the tactics of the united front are a method of clearly convincing the Social-Democratic workers of the correctness of the Communist policy and the incorrectness of the reformist policy, and *that they are not a reconciliation with Social-Democratic ideology and practice*. A successful struggle to establish the united front imperatively demands constant struggle in our ranks against tendencies to *depreciate the role of the Party, against legalist illusions, against*



reliance on *spontaneity and automatism*, both in liquidating fascism and in conducting the united front against the *slightest vacillation at the moment of decisive action*.

“It is necessary,” Stalin teaches us, “that the Party be able to combine in its work the greatest adhesion to principle (not to be confused with sectarianism!) with a maximum of contacts and connections with the masses (not to be confused with “tailism”!), without which it is impossible for the Party not only to teach the masses but also to learn from them, not only to lead the masses and raise them to the level of the Party, but to listen to the voice of the masses and divine their sorest needs.” (J Stalin, “The Perspective of the Communist Party of Germany and its Bolshevization”. *Pravda*, February 3, 1925.)

### *Political Unity of the Working Class*

Comrades, the development of the united front of joint struggle of the Communist and Social-Democratic workers against fascism and the offensive of capital likewise brings to the fore the question of *political unity, of a single political mass party of the working class*. The Social-Democratic workers are becoming more and more convinced by experience that the struggle against the class enemy demands unity of political leadership, in as much as *duality in leadership* impedes the further development and reinforcement of the joint struggle of the working class.

The interests of the class struggle of the proletariat and the success of the proletarian revolution make it imperative that there be a *single party of the proletariat* in each country. Of course, it is not so easy or simple to achieve this. It requires stubborn work and struggle and will of necessity be a more or less lengthy process. The Communist Parties, basing themselves on the growing urge of the workers for a unification of the Social-Democratic Parties or of individual organizations with the Communist Parties, must firmly and confidently take the initiative in this unification. The cause of amalgamating the forces of the working class in a single revolutionary proletarian party, at the time when the international labour movement is entering the period of closing the split in its ranks, is *our cause*, is the cause of the Communist International.

But while it is sufficient for the establishment of the united front of the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties to have an agreement to struggle against fascism, the offensive of capital, and war, the achievement of political unity is possible only on the basis of a number of definite conditions involving principles.

This unification is possible only:

*First, on condition of complete independence from the bourgeoisie and complete rupture of the bloc of Social-Democracy with the bourgeoisie;*

*Second, on condition that unity of action be first brought about;*

*Third, on condition that the necessity of the revolutionary overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviets be recognized;*

*Fourth, on condition that support of one's own bourgeoisie in imperialist war be rejected;*

*Fifth, on condition that the party be constructed on the basis of democratic centralism, which ensures unity of will and action, and which has been tested by the experience of the Russian Bolsheviks.*

We must explain to the Social-Democratic workers, patiently and in comradely fashion, why political unity of the working class is impossible without these conditions. We must discuss together with them the sense and significance of these conditions.

Why is it necessary for the realization of the political unity of the proletariat that there be complete independence of the bourgeoisie and a rupture of the bloc of Social-Democrats with the bourgeoisie?

Because the whole experience of the labour movement, particularly the experience of the fifteen years of coalition policy in Germany, has shown that the policy of class collaboration, the policy of dependence on the bourgeoisie, leads to the defeat of the working class and to the victory of fascism. And only the road of irreconcilable class struggle against the bourgeoisie, the road of the Bolsheviks, is the true road to victory.

Why must unity of action be first established as a preliminary condition of political unity?

Because unity of action to repel the offensive of capital and of fascism is possible and necessary even before the majority of the workers are



united on a common political platform for the overthrow of capitalism, while the working out of unity of views on the main lines and aims of the struggle of the proletariat, without which a unification of the parties is impossible, requires a more or less extended period of time. And unity of views is worked out best of all in joint struggle against the class enemy already *today*. To propose to unite at once instead of forming a united front means to place the cart before the horse and to imagine that the cart will then move ahead. Precisely for the reason that for us the question of political unity is not a manoeuvre, as it is for many Social-Democratic leaders, we insist on the realization of unity of action as one of the most important stages in the struggle for political unity.

Why is it necessary to recognize the necessity of the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviet power?

Because the experience of the victory of the great October Revolution on the one hand, and, on the other, the bitter lessons learned in Germany, Austria and Spain during the entire post-war period, have confirmed once more that the victory of the proletariat is possible only by means of the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie, and that the bourgeoisie would rather drown the labour movement in a sea of blood than allow the proletariat to establish socialism by peaceful means. The experience of the October Revolution has demonstrated patently that the basic content of the proletarian revolution is the question of the proletarian dictatorship, which is called upon to crush the resistance of the overthrown exploiters, to arm the revolution for the struggle against imperialism and to lead the revolution to the complete victory of socialism. To achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat as the dictatorship of the vast majority over an insignificant minority, over the exploiters—and only as such can it be brought about—for this *Soviets* are needed embracing all sections of the working class, the basic masses of the peasantry and the rest of the working people, without whose awakening, without whose inclusion in the front of the revolutionary struggle, the victory of the proletariat cannot be consolidated.

Why is the refusal of support to the bourgeoisie in an imperialist war a condition of political unity?

Because the bourgeoisie wages imperialist war for its predatory pur-

poses, against the interests of the vast majority of the peoples, under whatever guise this war may be waged. Because all imperialists combine their feverish preparations for war with extremely intensified exploitation and oppression of the working people in their own country. Support of the bourgeoisie in such a war means treason to the country and the international working class.

Why, finally, is the building of the party on the basis of democratic centralism a condition of unity?

Because only a party built on the basis of democratic centralism can ensure unity of will and action, can lead the proletariat to victory over the bourgeoisie, which has at its disposal so powerful a weapon as the centralized state apparatus. The application of the principle of democratic centralism has stood the splendid historical test of the experience of the Russian Bolshevik Party, the Party of Lenin and Stalin.

Yes, we are for a single mass political party of the working class. But this party must be, in the words of Comrade Stalin,

“... a militant party, a revolutionary party, bold enough to lead the proletarians to the struggle for power, with sufficient experience to be able to orientate itself in the complicated problems that arise in a revolutionary situation, and sufficiently flexible to steer clear of any submerged rocks on the way to its goal.”<sup>1</sup>

This explains why it is necessary to strive for political unity on the basis of the conditions indicated.

We are for the political unity of the working class. Therefore we are ready to collaborate most closely with all Social-Democrats who are for the united front and sincerely support unity on the above-mentioned principles. But precisely because we are for unity, we shall struggle resolutely against all “Left” demagogues who try to make use of the disillusionment of the Social-Democratic workers to create new Socialist Parties or Internationals directed against the Communist movement, and thus keep deepening the split in the working class.

We welcome the growing efforts among Social-Democratic workers for a united front with the Communists. In this fact we see a growth of their revolutionary consciousness and a beginning of the healing of the split

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<sup>1</sup>. J. Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*.



in the working class. Being of the opinion that unity of action is a pressing necessity and the truest road to the establishment of the political unity of the proletariat as well, we declare *that the Communist International and its Sections are ready to enter into negotiations with the Second International and its Sections for the establishment of the unity of the working class in the struggle against the offensive of capital, against fascism and the menace of imperialist war.*

#### IV. Conclusion

Comrades, I am concluding my report. As you see, taking into account the change in the situation since the Sixth Congress and the lessons of our struggle, and relying on the degree of consolidation already achieved in our Parties, we are raising a number of questions today *in a new way*, primarily the question of the united front and of the approach to Social-Democracy, the reformist trade unions and other mass organizations.

There are wiseacres who will sense in all this a digression from our basic positions, some sort of turn to the Right from the straight line of Bolshevism. Well, in my country, Bulgaria, they say that a hungry chicken always dreams of millet. Let those political chickens think so.

This interests us little. For us it is important that our own Parties and the wide masses throughout the world should correctly understand what we are striving for.

We would not be revolutionary Marxists, Leninists, worthy pupils of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, if we did not suitably *reconstruct* our policies and tactics in accordance with the changing situation and the changes occurring in the world labour movement.

We would not be real revolutionaries if we did not learn from our own experience and the experience of the masses.

We want our Parties in the capitalist countries to come out and act as *real political parties of the working class*, to become in actual fact *a political factor* in the life of their countries, to pursue at all times *an active Bolshevik mass policy*, and not confine themselves to *propaganda and criticism*, and bare appeals to *struggle for proletarian dictatorship*.

*We are enemies of all cut-and-dried schemes.* We want to take into account the concrete situation at each moment, in each place, and not act *according*

to a *fixed, stereotyped form* anywhere and everywhere; not to forget that in *varying* circumstances the position of the Communists cannot be *identical*.

We want soberly to take into account *all stages* in the development of the class struggle and in the growth of the class consciousness of the masses themselves, to be able to locate and solve at each stage the *concrete* problems of the revolutionary movement *corresponding* to this stage.

We want to find a *common language* with the broadest masses for the purpose of struggling against the class enemy, to find ways of finally overcoming *the isolation of the revolutionary vanguard* from the masses of the proletariat and all other working people, as well as of overcoming the fatal *isolation of the working class itself* from its natural allies in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, against fascism.

We want to draw increasingly wide masses into the revolutionary class struggle and lead them to the proletarian revolution, *proceeding from their vital interests and needs as the starting point, and their own experience as the basis*.

Following the example of our glorious Russian Bolsheviks, the example of the leading Party of the Communist International, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, we want to combine the *revolutionary heroism* of the German, the Spanish, the Austrian and other Communists *with genuine revolutionary realism*, and put an end to the last remnants of scholastic tinkering with serious political questions.

We want to equip our Parties from every angle for the solution of the highly complex political problems confronting them. For this purpose we want to raise ever higher their *theoretical level*, to train them in the spirit of living Marxism-Leninism and not dead doctrinairism.

We want to eradicate from our ranks all *self-satisfied sectarianism*, which above all blocks our road to the masses and impedes the carrying out of a truly Bolshevik mass policy. We want to intensify in every way the struggle against all concrete manifestations of Right opportunism, realizing that the danger from this side will increase precisely in the practice of carrying out our mass policy and struggle.

We want the Communists of each country promptly to draw and apply *all the lessons* that can be drawn from their own experience as the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat. We want them *as quickly as possible to learn how to sail on the turbulent waters of the class struggle*, and not to remain on the



shore as observers and registrars of the surging waves in the expectation of fine weather.

This is what we want!

*And we want all this because only in this way will the working class at the head of all the working people, welded into a million strong revolutionary army, led by the Communist International and possessed of so great and wise a pilot as our leader Comrade Stalin, be able to fulfill its historical mission with certainty—to sweep fascism off the face of the earth and, together with it, capitalism!*

August, 1935.

## UNITY OF THE WORKING CLASS AGAINST FASCISM

### SPEECH IN REPLY TO DISCUSSION

Comrades, the very full discussion on my report bears witness to the immense interest taken by the Congress in the fundamental tactical problems and tasks of the struggle of the working class against the offensive of capital and fascism, and against the threat of imperialist war.

Summing up the eight-day discussion, we can state that all the principal propositions contained in the report have met with the unanimous approval of the Congress. None of the speakers objected to the tactical line we have proposed or to the resolution which has been submitted.

I venture to say that at none of the previous Congresses of the Communist International has such ideological and political solidarity been revealed as at the present Congress. The complete unanimity displayed at the Congress indicates that the necessity of revising our policy and tactics in accordance with the changed conditions and on the basis of the extremely abundant and instructive experience of the past few years, has come to be fully recognized in our ranks.

This unanimity may undoubtedly be regarded as one of the most important conditions for success in solving the paramount immediate problem of the international proletarian movement, namely, *establishing unity of action of all sections of the working class in the struggle against fascism.*

The successful solution of this problem requires, first, that Communists skilfully wield the weapon of *Marxist-Leninist analysis*, while carefully studying the actual situation and the alignment of class forces as these develop and that they plan their activity and struggle accordingly. We must mercilessly root out the weakness, not infrequently observed among our comrades, for cut-and-dried schemes, lifeless formulas and ready-made patterns. We must put an end to the state of affairs in which Communists, when lacking the knowledge or ability for Marxist-Leninist analysis, substitute for it general phrases and slogans such as "the revolutionary way out of the crisis," without making the slightest serious attempt to explain what must be the conditions, the relationship of class forces, the degree of revolutionary maturity of the proletariat and mass of working



people, and the level of influence of the Communist Party for making possible such a revolutionary way out of the crisis. Without such an analysis all these catchwords become "dud" shells, empty phrases which only obscure our tasks of the day.

Without a concrete Marxist-Leninist analysis we shall never be able correctly to present and solve the problem of fascism, the problems of the proletarian united front and the People's Front, the problem of our attitude toward bourgeois democracy, the problem of a united front government, the problem of the processes going on within the working class, particularly among the Social-Democratic workers, or any of the numerous other new and complex problems with which life itself and the development of the class struggle confront us now and will confront us in the future.

Second, we need *live people*—people who have grown up from the masses of the workers, have sprung from their every-day struggle, people of militant action, whole-heartedly devoted to the cause of the proletariat, people whose brains and hands will give effect to the decisions of our Congress. Without Bolshevik, Leninist-Stalinist cadres we shall be unable to solve the enormous problems that confront the working people in the fight against fascism.

Third, we need people equipped with the compass of *Marxist-Leninist theory*, for people who are unable to make skilful use of this instrument slip into narrow, makeshift politics, are unable to look ahead, take decisions only from case to case, and lose the broad perspective of the struggle which shows the masses where we are going and whither we are leading the working people.

Fourth, we need the *organization of the masses* in order to put our decisions into practice. Our ideological and political influence alone is not enough. We must put a stop to reliance on the hope that the movement will develop *of its own accord*, which is one of our fundamental weaknesses. We must remember that without persistent, prolonged, patient, and sometimes seemingly thankless organizational work on our part the masses will never make for the Communist shore. In order to be able to organize the masses we must acquire the Lenin-Stalin art of making our decisions the property not only of the Communists but also of the widest masses of working people. We must learn to talk to the masses, not in the

language of book formulas, but in the language of fighters for the cause of the masses, whose every word, whose every idea reflects the innermost thoughts and sentiments of millions.

It is primarily with these problems that I should like to deal in my reply to the discussion.

Comrades, the Congress has welcomed the new tactical lines with great enthusiasm and unanimity. Enthusiasm and unanimity are excellent things of course; but it is still better when these are combined with a deeply considered and critical approach to the tasks that confront us, with a proper mastery of the decisions adopted and a real understanding of the means and methods by which these decisions are to be applied to the particular circumstances of each country.

After all, we have unanimously adopted good resolutions before now, but the trouble was that we not infrequently adopted these decisions in a formal manner, and at best made them the property of only the small vanguard of the working class. Our decisions did not become flesh and blood for the wide masses; they did not become a guide to the action of millions of people.

Can we assert that we have already finally abandoned this formal approach to adopted decisions? No. It must be said that even at this Congress the speeches of some of the comrades gave indication of remnants of formalism; a desire made itself felt at times to substitute for the concrete analysis of reality and living experience some sort of new scheme, some sort of new, over-simplified, lifeless formula, to represent *as actually existing* what we *desire*, but what does *not yet exist*.

### *The Struggle Against Fascism Must Be Concrete*

No general characterization of fascism, however correct in itself, can relieve us of the need to study and take into account the special features of the development of fascism and the various forms of fascist dictatorship in the individual countries and at its various stages. It is necessary in each country to investigate, study and ascertain the national peculiarities, the specific national features of fascism and to map out accordingly effective methods and forms of struggle against fascism.



Lenin persistently warned us against such "stereotyped methods, such mechanical levelling, such equalization of tactical rules, rules of struggle." This warning is particularly to the point when it is a question of fighting an enemy who so subtly and Jesuitically exploits the national sentiments and prejudices of the masses and their anti-capitalist inclinations in the interests of big capital. *Such an enemy must be known to perfection, from every angle.* We must, without any delay whatever, react to his various manoeuvres, discover his hidden moves, be prepared to repel him in any arena and at any moment. We must not hesitate even to *learn* from the enemy if that will help us more quickly and more effectively to *wring his neck*.

It would be a gross mistake to lay down any sort of universal scheme of the development of fascism, to cover all countries and all peoples. Such a scheme would not help but would hamper us in carrying on a real struggle. Apart from everything else, it would result in indiscriminately thrusting into the camp of fascism those sections of the population which, if properly approached, could at a certain stage of development be brought into the struggle against fascism, or could at least be neutralized.

Let us take, for example, the development of fascism in France and in Germany. Some comrades believe that, generally speaking, fascism cannot develop as easily in France as in Germany. What is true and what is false in this contention? It is true that there were no such deep-seated democratic traditions in Germany as there are in France, which went through several revolutions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is true that France is a country which won the war and imposed the Versailles system on other countries, that the national sentiments of the French people have not been hurt as they have been in Germany, where this factor played such a great part. It is true that in France the basic masses of the peasantry are pro-republic and anti-fascist, especially in the south, in contrast with Germany, where even before fascism came to power a considerable section of the peasantry was under the influence of reactionary parties.

But, comrades, notwithstanding the existing differences in the development of the fascist movement in France and in Germany, notwithstanding the factors which impede the onslaught of fascism in France, it would be shortsighted not to notice the uninterrupted growth there of the fascist peril or to underestimate the possibility of a fascist *coup d'etat*. Moreover,

a number of factors in France favour the development of fascism. One must not forget that the economic crisis, which began later in France than in other capitalist countries, continues to become deeper and more acute, and that this greatly encourages the orgy of fascist demagoguery. French fascism holds strong positions in the army, among the officers, such as the National-Socialists did not have in the Reichswehr before their advent to power. Furthermore, in no other country, perhaps, has the parliamentary regime been corrupted to such an enormous extent and caused such indignation among the masses as in France, and the French fascists, as we know, use this demagogically in their fight against bourgeois democracy. Nor must it be forgotten that the development of fascism is furthered by the French bourgeoisie's keen fear of losing its political and military hegemony in Europe.

Hence it follows that the successes scored by the anti-fascist movement in France, of which Comrades Thorez and Cachin have spoken here and over which we so heartily rejoice, are still far from indicating that the working masses have definitely succeeded in blocking the road to fascism. We must emphatically stress once more the great importance of the tasks of the French working class in the struggle against fascism, of which I have already spoken in my report.

It would likewise be dangerous to cherish illusions regarding the weakness of fascism in other countries where it does not have a broad mass base. We have the example of such countries as Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Finland, where fascism, although it had no broad base, came to power, relying on the armed forces of the state, and then sought to broaden its base by making use of the state apparatus.

Comrade Dutt was right in his contention that there has been a tendency among us to contemplate fascism in general, without taking into account the specific features of the fascist movement in the various countries, erroneously classifying all reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie as fascism and going as far as calling the entire non-Communist camp fascist. The struggle against fascism was not strengthened but rather weakened in consequence.

Even now we still have survivals of a stereotyped approach to the question of fascism. When some comrades assert that Roosevelt's "New



Deal" represents an even clearer and more pronounced form of the development of the bourgeoisie toward fascism than the "National Government" in Great Britain, for example, is this not a manifestation of such a stereotyped approach to the question? One must be very partial to hackneyed schemes not to see that the most reactionary circles of American finance capital, which are attacking Roosevelt, are above all the very force which is stimulating and organizing the fascist movement in the United States. Not to see the beginnings of real fascism in the United States behind the hypocritical outpourings of these circles "in defence of the democratic rights of the American citizen" is tantamount to misleading the working class in the struggle against its worst enemy.

In the colonial and semi-colonial countries also, as was mentioned in the discussion, certain fascist groups are developing; but, of course, there can be no question of the kind of fascism that we are accustomed to see in Germany, Italy and other capitalist countries. Here we must study and take into account the quite special economic, political and historical conditions, in accordance with which fascism is assuming, and will continue to assume, peculiar forms of its own.

Unable to approach the phenomena of real life concretely, some comrades who suffer from mental laziness substitute general, noncommittal *formulas* for a careful and concrete study of the actual situation and the relationship of class forces. They remind us, not of sharpshooters who shoot with unerring aim, but of those "crack" riflemen who regularly and unfailingly miss the target, shooting either too high or too low, too near or too far. But we, comrades, as Communist fighters in the labour movement, as the revolutionary vanguard of the working class, want to be sharpshooters who unfailingly hit the target.

### *The United Proletarian Front and the Anti-Fascist People's Front*

Some comrades are quite needlessly racking their brains over the problem of *what to begin with—the united proletarian front or the anti-fascist People's Front*.

Some say that we cannot start forming the anti-fascist People's Front until we have organized a solid united front of the proletariat.

Others argue that, since the establishment of the united proletarian front meets in a number of countries with the resistance of the reactionary part of Social-Democracy, it is better to start at once with building up the People's Front, and then develop the united working class front on this basis.

Evidently both groups fail to understand that the united proletarian front and the anti-fascist People's Front are connected by the *living dialectics of struggle*; that they are interwoven, the one passing into the other in the process of the practical struggle against fascism, and that there is certainly no Chinese wall to keep them apart.

For it cannot be seriously supposed that it is possible to establish a genuine anti-fascist People's Front without securing the unity of action of the working class itself, the *leading force* of this anti-fascist People's Front. At the same time, the further development of the united proletarian front depends, to a considerable degree, upon its transformation into a People's Front against fascism.

Comrades! Just picture to yourselves a devotee of cut-and-dried theories of this kind, gazing upon our resolution and contriving his pet scheme with the zeal of a true pedant:

First, local united proletarian front from below;

Then, regional united front from below;

Thereafter, united front from above, passing through the same stages;

Then, unity in the trade union movement;

After that, the enlistment of other anti-fascist parties;

This to be followed by the extended People's Front, from above and from below.

After which the movement must be raised to a higher level, politicalized, revolutionized, and so on and so forth.

You will say, comrades, that this is sheer nonsense. I agree with you. But the unfortunate thing is that in some form or other this kind of sectarian nonsense is still to be found quite frequently on our ranks.

How does the matter really stand? Of course, we must strive everywhere for a wide People's Front of struggle against fascism. But in a number of countries we shall not get beyond general talk about the People's Front unless we succeed in mobilizing the masses of the workers for the purpose



of breaking down the resistance of the reactionary section of Social-Democracy to the proletarian united front of struggle. Primarily this is how the matter stands in Great Britain, where the working class comprises the majority of the population and where the bulk of the working class follows the lead of the trade unions and the Labour Party. That is how matters stand in Belgium and in the Scandinavian countries, where the numerically small Communist Parties must face strong mass trade unions and numerically large Social-Democratic Parties.

In these countries the Communists would commit a very serious political mistake if they shirked the struggle to establish a united proletarian front, under cover of general talk about the People's Front, which cannot be formed without the participation of the mass working-class organizations. In order to bring about a genuine People's Front in these countries, the Communists must carry out an enormous amount of political and organizational work among the masses of the workers. They must overcome the preconceived ideas of these masses, who regard their large reformist organizations as already the embodiment of proletarian unity. They must convince these masses that the establishment of a united front with the Communists means a shift on the part of those masses to the position of the class struggle, and that only this shift guarantees success in the struggle against the offensive of capital and fascism. We shall not overcome our difficulties by setting ourselves much wider tasks here. On the contrary, in fighting to remove these difficulties we shall, in fact and not in words alone, prepare the ground for the creation of a genuine People's Front of struggle against fascism, against the capitalist offensive and against the threat of imperialist war.

The problem is different in countries like Poland, where a strong peasant movement is developing alongside the labour movement, where the peasant masses have their own organizations, which are becoming radicalized as a result of the agrarian crisis, and where national oppression evokes indignation among the national minorities. Here the development of the People's Front of struggle will proceed parallel with the development of the united proletarian front, and at times in this type of country the movement for a general People's Front may even outstrip the movement for a working-class front.

Take a country like Spain, which is in the process of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Can it be said that because the proletariat is split up into numerous small organizations, complete fighting unity of the working class must first be established here before a workers' and peasants' front against Lerroux and Gil Robles is created? By tackling the question in this way we would isolate the proletariat from the peasantry, we would in effect be withdrawing the slogan of the agrarian revolution, and we would make it easier for the enemies of the people to disunite the proletariat and the peasantry and set the peasantry in opposition to the working class. Yet this, comrades, as is well known, was one of the main reasons why the working class was defeated in the October events of 1934 in Asturias.

However, one thing must not be forgotten: in all countries where the proletariat is comparatively small in numbers, where the peasantry and the urban petty-bourgeois strata predominate, it is all the more necessary to make every effort to set up a firm united front of the working class itself, so that it may be able to take its place as the leading factor in relation to all the working people.

Thus, comrades, in attacking the problem of the proletarian front and the People's Front, there can be no general panacea suitable for all cases, all countries, all peoples. In this matter universalism, the application of one and the same recipe to all countries, is equivalent, if you will allow me to say so, to ignorance; and ignorance should be flogged, even when it stalks about, nay, particularly when it stalks about, in the cloak of universal cut-and-dried schemes.

### *The Role of Social-Democracy and Its Attitude Toward the United Front of the Proletariat*

Comrades, in view of the tactical problems confronting us, it is very important to give a correct reply to the question of whether Social-Democracy at the present time is still the principal bulwark of the bourgeoisie, and if so, where?

Some of the comrades who participated in the discussion (Comrades Florin, Dutt) touched upon this question, but in view of its importance a fuller reply must be given to it, for it is a question which workers of all



trends, particularly Social-Democratic workers, are asking and cannot help asking.

It must be borne in mind that in a number of countries the position of Social-Democracy in the bourgeois state, and its attitude toward the bourgeoisie, have been undergoing a change.

In the first place, the crisis has severely shaken the position of even the most secure sections of the working class, the so-called aristocracy of labour, which, as we know, is the main support of Social-Democracy. These sections, too, are beginning more and more to revise their views as to the expediency of the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie.

Second, as I pointed out in my report, the bourgeoisie in a number of countries is itself compelled to abandon bourgeois democracy and resort to the terroristic form of dictatorship, depriving Social-Democracy not only of its previous position in the state system of finance capital, but also, under certain conditions, of its legal status, persecuting and even suppressing it.

Third, under the influence of the lessons learned from the defeat of the workers in Germany, Austria and Spain,<sup>1</sup> a defeat which was largely the result of the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and, on the other hand, under the influence of the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union as a result of Bolshevik policy and the application of revolutionary Marxism, the Social-Democratic workers are becoming revolutionized and are beginning to turn to the class struggle against the bourgeoisie.

The combined effect of this has been to make it increasingly difficult, and in some countries actually impossible, for Social-Democracy to preserve its former role of bulwark of the bourgeoisie.

Failure to understand this is particularly harmful in those countries in which the fascist dictatorship has deprived Social-Democracy of its legal status. From this point of view the self-criticism of those German comrades who in their speeches mentioned the necessity of ceasing to cling to the letter of obsolete formulas and decisions concerning Social-Democracy, of ceasing to ignore the changes that have taken place in its position, was correct. It is clear that if we ignore these changes, it will lead to a distortion

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<sup>1</sup>. Reference is to the fighting in Asturias in 1934.

of our policy for bringing about the unity of the working class, and will make it easier for the reactionary elements of the Social-Democratic Parties to sabotage the united front.

The process of revolutionization in the ranks of the Social-Democratic Parties, now going on in all countries, is developing unevenly. It must not be imagined that the Social-Democratic workers who are becoming revolutionized will *at once* and on a mass scale pass over to the position of consistent class struggle and will *straightway* unite with the Communists without any intermediate stages. In a number of countries this will be a more or less difficult, complicated and prolonged process, essentially dependent, at any rate, on the correctness of our policy and tactics. We must even reckon with the possibility that, in passing from the position of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie to the position of class struggle against the bourgeoisie, some Social-Democratic Parties and organizations will continue to exist for a time as independent organizations or parties. In such event there can, of course, be no thought of such Social-Democratic organizations or parties being regarded as a bulwark of the bourgeoisie.

It cannot be expected that those Social-Democratic workers who are under the influence of the ideology of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, which has been instilled in them for decades, will break with this ideology of their own accord, by the action of objective causes alone. No. It is our business, the business of Communists, to help them free themselves from the hold of reformist ideology. The work of explaining the principles and program of communism must be carried on patiently, in a comradely fashion, and must be adapted to the degree of development of the individual Social-Democratic workers. Our criticism of Social-Democracy must become more concrete and systematic, and must be based on the experience of the Social-Democratic masses themselves. It must be borne in mind that primarily by utilizing their experience in the joint struggle with the Communists against the class enemy will it be possible and necessary to facilitate and accelerate the revolutionary development of the Social-Democratic workers. There is no more effective way for overcoming the doubts and hesitations of the Social-Democratic workers than by their participation in the proletarian united front.



We shall do all in our power to make it easier, not only for the Social-Democratic workers, but also for those leading members of the Social-Democratic Parties and organizations who sincerely desire to adopt the revolutionary class position, to work and fight with us against the class enemy. At the same time we declare that any Social-Democratic functionary, lower official or worker who continues to uphold the disruptive tactics of the reactionary Social-Democratic leaders, who comes out against the united front and thus directly or indirectly aids the class enemy, will thereby incur at least equal guilt before the working class as those who are historically responsible for having supported the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration, the policy which in a number of European countries doomed the revolution in 1918 and cleared the way for fascism.

The attitude to the united front marks the dividing line between the reactionary sections of Social-Democracy and the sections that are becoming revolutionary. Our assistance to the latter will be the more effective the more we intensify our fight against the reactionary camp of Social-Democracy that takes part in a bloc with the bourgeoisie. And within the Left camp the self-determination of its various elements will take place the sooner, the more determinedly the Communists fight for a united front with the Social-Democratic Parties. The experience of the class struggle and the participation of the Social-Democrats in the united front movement will show who in that camp will prove to be "Left" in words and who is really Left.

### *The United Front Government*

While the attitude of Social-Democracy toward the practical realization of the proletarian united front is, generally speaking, the chief sign in every country of whether the previous role in the bourgeois state of the Social-Democratic Party or of its individual parts has changed, and if so, to what extent—the attitude of Social-Democracy on the issue of a united front government will be a particularly clear test in this respect.

When a situation arises in which the question of creating a united front government becomes an immediate practical problem, this issue will become a decisive test of the policy of Social-Democracy in the given coun-

try: either jointly with the bourgeoisie, that is moving toward fascism, against the working class; or jointly with the revolutionary proletariat against fascism and reaction, not merely in words but in deeds. That is how the question will inevitably present itself at the time the united front government is formed as well as while it is in power.

With regard to the character and conditions for the formation of the united front government or anti-fascist People's Front government, I think that my report gave what was necessary for general tactical direction. To expect us over and above this to indicate all possible forms and all conditions under which such governments may be formed would mean to lose oneself in barren conjecture.

I would like to utter a note of warning against over-simplification or the application of cut-and-dried schemes in this question. Life is more complex than any scheme. For example, it would be wrong to imagine that the united front government is an *indispensable stage* on the road to the establishment of proletarian dictatorship. That is just as wrong as the former assertion that there will be *no intermediary stages* in the fascist countries and that fascist dictatorship is *certain to be immediately* superseded by proletarian dictatorship.

The whole question boils down to this : Will the proletariat itself be prepared at the decisive moment for the direct overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of its own power, and will it be able in that event to ensure the support of its allies? Or will the movement of the united proletarian front and the anti-fascist People's Front at the particular stage be in a position only to suppress or overthrow fascism, without directly proceeding to abolish the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie? In the latter case it would be an intolerable piece of political short sightedness, and not serious revolutionary politics, on this ground alone to refuse to create and support a united front or a People's Front government.

It is likewise not difficult to understand that the establishment of a united front government in countries where fascism is not yet in power is something *different* from the creation of such a government in countries where the fascist dictatorship holds sway. In the latter countries a united front government can be created *only in the process of overthrowing fascist rule*. In countries where the *bourgeois-democratic revolution is developing*, a People's



Front government may become the government of the democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry.

As I have already pointed out in my report, the Communists will do all in their power to support a united front government to the extent that the latter will really fight against the enemies of the people and grant freedom of action to the Communist Party and to the working class. The question of whether Communists will take part in the government will be determined entirely by the actual situation prevailing at the time. Such questions will be settled as they arise. No ready-made recipes can be prescribed in advance.

### *Attitude Toward Bourgeois Democracy*

It has been pointed out here that while mobilizing the masses to repel the onslaught of fascism against the rights of the working people, the Polish Party at the same time "had its misgivings about formulating positive democratic demands, fearing that this would create democratic illusions among the masses." The Polish Party is, of course, not the only one in which such fear of formulating positive democratic demands exists in one form or another.

Where does this fear come from, comrades? It comes from an incorrect, non-dialectical conception of our attitude toward bourgeois democracy. We Communists are unswerving upholders of Soviet democracy, the great example of which is the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union, where the introduction of equal suffrage and the direct and secret ballot has been proclaimed by resolution of the Seventh Congress of Soviets, at the very time that the last relics of bourgeois democracy are being wiped out in the capitalist countries. This Soviet democracy presupposes the victory of the proletarian revolution, the conversion of private property of the means of production into public property, the adoption by the overwhelming majority of the people of the road to socialism. This democracy does not represent a final form; it develops and will continue to develop in proportion as further progress is made in socialist construction, in the creation of classless society and in the overcoming of the survivals of capitalism in economic life and in the minds of the people.

But today the millions of working people living under capitalism are faced with the necessity of deciding their attitude to *those forms* in which the rule of the bourgeoisie is clad in the various countries. We are not Anarchists, and it is not at all a matter of indifference to us what kind of political regime exists in any given country: whether a bourgeois dictatorship in the form of bourgeois democracy, even with democratic rights and liberties greatly curtailed, or a bourgeois dictatorship in its open, fascist form. While being upholders of Soviet democracy, *we shall defend every inch of the democratic gains which the working class has wrested in the course of years of stubborn struggle, and shall resolutely fight to extend these gains.*

How great were the sacrifices of the British working class before it secured the right to strike, a legal status for its trade unions, the right of assembly and freedom of the press, extension of the franchise, and other rights! How many tens of thousands of workers gave their lives in the revolutionary battles fought in France in the nineteenth century to obtain the elementary rights and the lawful opportunity of organizing their forces for the struggle against the exploiters! The proletariat of all countries has shed much of its blood to win bourgeois-democratic liberties, and will naturally fight with all its strength to retain them.

Our attitude to bourgeois democracy is not the same under all conditions. For instance, at the time of the October Revolution, the Russian Bolsheviks engaged in a life-and death struggle against all those political parties which, under the slogan of the defence of bourgeois democracy, opposed the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. The Bolsheviks fought these parties because the banner of bourgeois democracy had at that time become the standard around which all counter-revolutionary forces mobilized to challenge the victory of the proletariat. The situation is quite different in the capitalist countries at present. Now the fascist counter-revolution is attacking bourgeois democracy in an effort to establish the most barbaric regime of exploitation and suppression of the working masses. Now the working masses in a number of capitalist countries are faced with the necessity of making a *definite* choice, and of making it today, not between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois democracy, but between bourgeois democracy and fascism.

Besides, we have now a situation which differs from that which existed,



for example, in the epoch of capitalist stabilization. At that time the fascist danger was not as acute as it is today. At that time it was bourgeois dictatorship in the form of bourgeois democracy that the revolutionary workers were facing in a number of countries and it was against bourgeois democracy that they were concentrating their fire. In Germany, they fought against the Weimar Republic, not because it was a republic, but because it was a *bourgeois* republic that was engaged in crushing the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, especially in 1918-20 and in 1923.

But could the Communists retain the same position also when the fascist movement began to raise its head, when, for instance, in 1932, the fascists in Germany were organizing and arming hundreds of thousands of storm troopers against the working class? Of course not. It was the mistake of the Communists in a number of countries, particularly in Germany, that they failed to take account of the changes that had taken place, but continued to repeat the slogans and maintain the tactical positions that had been correct a few years before, especially when the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship was an immediate issue, and when the entire German counter-revolution was rallying under the banner of the Weimar Republic, as it did in 1918-20.

And the circumstance that even today we can still notice in our ranks a fear of launching positive democratic slogans indicates how little our comrades have mastered the Marxist-Leninist method of approaching such important problems of our tactics. Some say that the struggle for democratic rights may divert the workers from the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship. It may not be amiss to recall what Lenin said on this question:

“It would be a fundamental mistake to suppose that the struggle for democracy can divert the proletariat from the socialist revolution, or obscure, or overshadow it, etc. On the contrary, just as socialism cannot be victorious unless it introduces complete democracy, so the proletariat will be unable to prepare for victory over the bourgeoisie unless it wages a many-sided, consistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy”.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>. V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. V.

These words should be firmly fixed in the memories of all our comrades, bearing in mind that in history great revolutions have grown out of small movements for the defence of the elementary rights of the working class. But in order to be able to link up the struggle for democratic rights with the struggle of the working class for socialism, it is necessary first and foremost to discard any cut-and-dried approach to the question of defence of bourgeois democracy.

*A Correct Line Alone Is Not Enough*

Comrades, it is clear, of course, that for the Communist International and each of its Sections the fundamental thing is to work out a correct line. But a correct line alone is not enough for concrete leadership in the class struggle.

For that, a number of conditions must be fulfilled, above all the following:

First, *organizational guarantees* that adopted decisions will be carried out in practice and that all obstacles in the way will be resolutely overcome.

What Comrade Stalin said at the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union about the conditions necessary to carry out the line of the Party can and should be applied also, in its entirety, to the decisions which our Congress adopts. Comrade Stalin said:

“Some people think that it is sufficient to draw up a correct Party line, proclaim it from the housetops, enunciate it in the form of general theses and resolutions, and carry them unanimously in order to make victory come of itself, automatically, so to speak. This, of course, is wrong. This is a great delusion. Only incorrigible bureaucrats and office rats can think that . . . Good resolutions and declarations in favour of the general line of the Party are only a beginning; they merely express the desire to win, but it is not victory. After the correct line has been given, after a correct solution of the problem has been found, success depends on the manner in which the work is organized, on the organization of the struggle for the application of the line of the Party, on the proper selection of people, on supervising the fulfilment of the decisions of the leading organs. Without this the correct line of the Party and the correct solutions are in danger of being severely damaged. More than



that, after the correct political line has been given, the organizational work decides everything, including the fate of the political line itself, i.e., whether it is fulfilled or not."<sup>1</sup>

It is hardly necessary to add anything to these striking words of Comrade Stalin, which must become a guiding principle in all the work of our Parties.

Another condition is the *ability to convert decisions of the Communist International and its Sections into decisions of the widest masses themselves*. This is all the more necessary now, when we are faced with the task of organizing a united front of the proletariat and drawing very wide masses of the people into an anti-fascist People's Front. The political and tactical genius of Lenin and Stalin stands out most clearly and vividly in their masterly ability to get the masses to understand the correct line and the slogans of the Party through their own experience. If we trace the history of Bolshevism, that greatest of treasure houses of the political strategy and tactics of the revolutionary labour movement, we can become convinced that the Bolsheviks never substituted methods of leading the Party for methods of leading the masses.

Comrade Stalin pointed out that one of the peculiarities of the tactics of the Russian Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for the October Revolution consisted in their ability correctly to determine the path and the turns which naturally lead the masses to the slogans of the Party, to the very "threshold of the revolution," helping them to sense, to test and to realize from their own experience the correctness of these slogans. They did not confuse leadership of the Party with leadership of the masses, but clearly saw the difference between leadership of the first kind and leadership of the second kind. In this way they worked out tactics as the science not only of Party leadership, but also of the leadership of the millions of working people.

Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that *the masses cannot assimilate our decisions unless we learn to speak the language which the masses understand*.

We do not always know how to speak simply, concretely, in images

<sup>1</sup>. J. Stalin, *Report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C. P. S. U. (B.) on the Work of the Central Committee of the C. P. S. U. (B.)*.

which are familiar and intelligible to the masses. We are still unable to refrain from abstract formulas which we have learnt by rote. As a matter of fact, if you look through our leaflets, newspapers, resolutions and theses, you will find that they are often written in a language and style so heavy that they are difficult for even our Party functionaries to understand, let alone the rank-and-file workers.

If we reflect, comrades, that workers, especially in fascist countries, who distribute or only read these leaflets risk their very lives by doing so, we shall realize still more clearly the need of writing for the masses in a language which they understand, so that the sacrifices made shall not have been in vain.

The same applies in no less degree to our oral agitation and propaganda. We must admit quite frankly that in this respect the fascists have often proven more dexterous and flexible than many of our comrades.

I recall, for example, a meeting of unemployed in Berlin before Hitler's accession to power. It was at the time of the trial of those notorious swindlers and speculators, the Sklarek brothers, which dragged on for several months. A National-Socialist speaker in addressing the meeting made demagogic use of that trial to further his own ends. He referred to the swindles, the bribery and other crimes committed by the Sklarek brothers, emphasized that the trial had been dragging for months and figured out how many hundreds of thousands of marks it had already cost the German people. To the accompaniment of loud applause the speaker declared that such bandits as the Sklarek brothers should have been shot without any ado, and the money wasted on the trial should have gone to the unemployed.

A Communist rose and asked for the floor. The chairman at first refused but under the pressure of the audience, which wanted to hear a Communist, he had to let him speak. When the Communist got up on the platform, everybody awaited with tense expectation what the Communist speaker would have to say. Well, what did he say?

"Comrades," he began in a loud and strong voice, "the Plenum of the Communist International has just closed. It showed the way to the salvation of the working class. The chief task it puts before you, comrades, is '*to win the majority of the working classes.*' . . . The Plenum pointed out that the



unemployed movement must be 'politicalized.' The Plenum calls on us to raise it *to a higher level*." He went on in the same strain, evidently under the impression that he was "explaining" authentic decisions of the Plenum.

Could such a speech appeal to the unemployed? Could they find any satisfaction in the fact that first we intended to politicalize, then revolutionize, and finally mobilize them in order to raise their movement to a higher level?

Sitting in a corner of the hall, I observed with chagrin how the unemployed, who had been so eager to hear a Communist in order to find out from him what to do concretely, began to yawn and display unmistakable signs of disappointment. And I was not at all surprised when toward the end the chairman rudely cut our speaker short without any protest from the meeting.

This, unfortunately, is not the only case of its kind in our agitational work. Nor were such cases confined to Germany. To agitate in such fashion means to agitate against one's own cause. It is high time to put an end once and for all to these, to say the least, childish methods of agitation.

During my report, the chairman, Comrade Kuusinen, received a characteristic letter from the floor of the Congress addressed to me. Let me read it:

"In your speech at the Congress, please take up the following question, namely, that all resolutions and decisions adopted in the future by the Communist International be written so that not only trained Communists can get the meaning, but that any working man reading the material of the Comintern might without any preliminary training be able to see at once what the Communists want, and of what service communism is to mankind. Some Party leaders forget this. They must be reminded of it, and very strongly, too. Also that agitation for communism be conducted in understandable language."

I do not know exactly who is the author of this letter, but I have no doubt that this comrade voiced in his letter the opinion and desire of millions of workers. Many of our comrades think that the more high-sounding words, and the more formulas and theses unintelligible to the

masses they use, the better their agitation and propaganda, forgetting that the greatest leaders and theoreticians of the working class of our epoch, Lenin and Stalin, have always spoken and written in highly popular language, readily understood by the masses.

Every one of us must make this a law, a Bolshevik law, an elementary rule:

*When writing or speaking always have in mind the rank-and-file worker who must understand you, must believe in your appeal and be ready to follow you! You must have in mind those for whom you write, to whom you speak.*

### *Cadres*

Comrades, our best resolutions will remain scraps of paper if we lack the people who can put them into effect. Unfortunately, however, I must state that the problem of *cadres*, one of the most important questions facing us, has received almost no attention at this Congress. The report of the Executive Committee of the Communist International was discussed for seven days, there were many speakers from various countries, but only a few, and they only in passing, discussed this question, so extremely vital for the Communist Parties and the labour movement. In their practical work our Parties have not yet realized by far that *people, cadres, decide everything*. They have not learnt to do as Comrade Stalin teaches us, namely, to cultivate cadres "as a gardener cultivates his favourite fruit tree," "to appreciate people, to appreciate cadres, to appreciate every worker who is capable of helping our common cause."

A negligent attitude to the problem of cadres is all the more impermissible for the reason that we are constantly losing some of the most valuable of our cadres in the struggle. For we are not a learned society but a militant movement which is constantly in the firing line. Our most energetic, most courageous and most class conscious elements are in the front ranks. It is precisely these front-line men that the enemy hunts down, murders, throws into jail and concentration camps and subjects to excruciating torture, particularly in fascist countries. This gives rise to the urgent necessity of constantly replenishing the ranks, cultivating and training new cadres as well as carefully preserving the existing cadres.



The problem of cadres is of particular urgency for the additional reason that under our influence the mass united front movement is gaining momentum and bringing forward many thousands of new working-class militants. Moreover, it is not only young revolutionary elements, not only workers just becoming revolutionary, who have never before participated in a political movement, that stream into our ranks. Very often former members and militants of the Social-Democratic Parties also join us. These new cadres require special attention, particularly in the illegal Communist Parties, the more so because in their practical work these cadres with their poor theoretical training frequently come up against very serious political problems which they have to solve for themselves.

The problem of what shall be the *correct policy with regard to cadres* is a very serious one for our Parties, as well as for the Young Communist Leagues and for all other mass organizations—for the entire revolutionary labour movement.

What does a correct policy with regard to cadres imply?

First, *knowing one's people*. As a rule there is no systematic study of cadres in our Parties. Only recently have the Communist Parties of France and Poland and, in the East, the Communist Party of China, achieved certain successes in this direction. The Communist Party of Germany, before its underground period, had also undertaken a study of its cadres. The experience of these Parties has shown that as soon as they began to study their people, Party workers were discovered who had remained unnoticed before. On the other hand, the Parties began to be purged of alien elements who were ideologically and politically harmful. It is sufficient to point to the example of Célor and Barbé in France, who, when put under the Bolshevik microscope, turned out to be agents of the class enemy and were thrown out of the Party. In Poland and in Hungary the verification of cadres made it easier to discover nests of provocateurs, agents of the enemy, who had sedulously concealed their identity.

Second, *proper promotion of cadres*. Promotion should not be something casual but one of the normal functions of the Party. It is bad when promotion is made exclusively on the basis of narrow Party considerations, without regard to whether the Communist promoted has contact with the masses or not. Promotion should take place on the basis of the ability of

the various Party workers to discharge particular functions, and of their popularity among the masses. We have examples in our Parties of promotions which have produced excellent results. For instance, we have a Spanish woman Communist, sitting in the Presidium of this Congress, Comrade Dolores. Two years ago she was still a rank-and-file Party worker. But in the very first clashes with the class enemy she proved to be an excellent agitator and fighter. Subsequently promoted to the leading body of the Party she has proved herself a most worthy member of that body.

I could point to a number of similar cases in several other countries, but in the majority of cases promotions are made in an unorganized and haphazard manner, and therefore are not always fortunate. Sometimes moralizers, phrasemongers and chatterboxes who actually harm the cause are promoted to leading positions.

Third, *the ability to use people to best advantage*. We must be able to ascertain and utilize the valuable qualities of every single active member. There are no ideal people; we must take them as they are and correct their weaknesses and shortcomings. We know of glaring examples in our Parties of the wrong utilization of good, honest Communists who might have been very useful had they been given work that they were better fit to do.

Fourth, *proper distribution of cadres*. First of all, we must see to it that the main links of the movement are in the charge of capable people who have contacts with the masses, who come from the very heart of the masses, who have initiative and are staunch. The more important districts should have an appropriate number of such activists. In capitalist countries it is not an easy matter to transfer cadres from one place to another. Such a task encounters a number of obstacles and difficulties, including lack of funds, family considerations, etc., difficulties which must be taken into account and properly overcome. But usually we neglect to do this altogether.

Fifth, *systematic assistance to cadres*. This assistance should take the form of careful instruction, comradely control, rectification of shortcomings and mistakes and concrete, everyday guidance.

Sixth, *proper care for the preservation of cadres*. We must learn promptly to withdraw Party workers to the rear whenever circumstances so require, and replace them by others. We must demand that the Party leadership, particularly in countries where the Parties are illegal, assume paramount



responsibility for the preservation of cadres. The proper preservation of cadres also presupposes highly efficient organization of secrecy in the Party. In certain of our Parties many comrades think that the Parties are already prepared for the event of illegality even though they have reorganized themselves only formally, according to ready-made rules. We had to pay very dearly for having started the real work of reorganization only after the Party had gone underground, under the direct heavy blows of the enemy. Remember the severe losses the Communist Party of Germany suffered during its transition to underground conditions! Its experience should serve as a serious warning to those of our Parties which today are still legal but may lose their legal status tomorrow.

Only a correct policy in regard to cadres will enable our Parties to develop and utilize all available forces to the utmost, and obtain from the enormous reservoir of the mass movement ever fresh reinforcements of new and better active workers.

What should be our *main criteria* in selecting cadres?

First, *absolute devotion* to the cause of the working class, *loyalty to the Party*, tested in face of the enemy—in battle, in prison, in court.

Second, the closest possible *contact with the masses*. The comrades concerned must be wholly absorbed in the interests of the masses, feel the life pulse of the masses, know their sentiments and requirements. The prestige of the leaders of our Party organizations should be based, first of all, on the fact that the masses regard them as their leaders and are convinced through their own experience of their ability as leaders and of their determination and self-sacrifice in struggle.

Third, *ability independently to find one's bearings* and not to be afraid of *assuming responsibility in making decisions*. He who fears to take responsibility is not a leader. He who is unable to display initiative, who says: "I will do only what I am told," is not a Bolshevik. Only he is a real Bolshevik leader who does not lose his head at moments of defeat, who does not get a swelled head at moments of success, who displays indomitable firmness in carrying out decisions. Cadres develop and grow best when they are placed in the position of having to solve concrete problems of the struggle independently, and are aware that they are fully responsible for their decisions.

Fourth, *discipline* and *Bolshevik hardening* in the struggle against the class enemy as well as in their irreconcilable opposition to all deviations from the Bolshevik line.

We must place all the more emphasis on these conditions which determine the correct selection of cadres, because in practice preference is very often given to a comrade who, for example, is able to write well and is a good speaker, but is not a man or woman of action, and is not as suited for the struggle as some other comrade who perhaps may not be able to write or speak so well, but is a staunch comrade, possessing initiative and contact with the masses, and is capable of going into battle and leading others into battle. Have there not been many cases of sectarians, doctrinaires or moralizers crowding out loyal mass workers, genuine working-class leaders?

Our leading cadres should combine the knowledge of *what they* must do—with *Bolshevik stamina, revolutionary strength of character and the will power to carry it through*.

In connection with the question of cadres, permit me, comrades, to dwell also on the very great part which the International Labour Defence is called upon to play in relation to the cadres of the labour movement. The material and moral assistance which the I.L.D. organizations render to our prisoners and their families, to political emigrants, to prosecuted revolutionaries and anti-fascists, has saved the lives and preserved the strength and fighting capacity of thousands upon thousands of most valuable fighters of the working class in many countries. Those of us who have been in jail have found out directly through our own experience the enormous significance of the activity of the I.L.D.

By its activity the I.L.D. has won the affection, devotion and deep gratitude of hundreds of thousands of proletarians and of revolutionary elements among the peasantry and intellectuals.

Under present conditions, when bourgeois reaction is growing, when fascism is raging and the class struggle is becoming more acute, the role of the I.L.D. is increasing immensely. The task now before the I.L.D. is to become a genuine mass organization of the working people in all capitalist countries (particularly in fascist countries, where it must adapt itself to the special conditions prevailing there). It must become, so to speak,



a sort of "Red Cross" of the united front of the proletariat and of the anti-fascist People's Front, embracing millions of working people—the "Red Cross" of the army of the toiling classes embattled against fascism, fighting for peace and socialism. If the I.L.D. is to perform its part successfully, it must train thousands of its own active militants, a multitude of its own cadres, I.L.D. *cadres*, answering in their character and capacity to the *special purposes* of this extremely important organization.

And here I must say as categorically and as sharply as possible that while a *bureaucratic* approach and a soulless attitude toward people is despicable in the labour movement taken in general, in the sphere of activity of the I.L.D. such an attitude is an evil bordering on the *criminal*. The fighters of the working class, the victims of reaction and fascism who are suffering agony in torture chambers and concentration camps, political emigrants and their families, should all meet with the most sympathetic care and solicitude on the part of the organizations and functionaries of the I.L.D.

The I.L.D. must still better appreciate and discharge its duty of assisting the fighters in the proletarian and anti-fascist movement, particularly in physically and morally preserving the cadres of the labour movement. The Communists and revolutionary workers who are active in the I.L.D. organizations must realize at every step the enormous responsibility they bear before the working class and the Communist International for the successful fulfilment of the role and tasks of the I.L.D.

Comrades, as you know, cadres receive their best training *in the process of struggle*, in surmounting difficulties and withstanding tests, and also from *favourable* and *unfavourable* examples of conduct. We have hundreds of examples of splendid conduct in times of strikes, during demonstrations, in jail, in court. We have thousands of instances of heroism, but unfortunately also not a few cases of pigeon-heartedness, lack of firmness and even desertion. We often forget these examples, both good and bad. We do not teach people to benefit by these examples. We do not show them *what* should be emulated and *what* rejected. We must study the conduct of our comrades and militant workers during class conflicts, under police interrogation, in the jails and concentration camps, in court, etc. The good examples should be brought to light and held up as models to be followed, and all that is rotten, non-Bolshevik and philistine should be cast aside.

Since the Leipzig trial we have had quite a number of our comrades whose statements before bourgeois and fascist courts have shown that numerous cadres are growing up with an excellent understanding of what really constitutes Bolshevik conduct in court.

But how many even of you delegates to the Congress know the details of the trial of the railwaymen in Rumania, know about the trial of Fiete Schulz, who was subsequently beheaded by the fascists in Germany, the trial of our valiant Japanese comrade Ichikawa, the trial of the Bulgarian revolutionary soldiers, and many other trials at which admirable examples of proletarian heroism were displayed?

Such worthy examples of proletarian heroism must be popularized, must be contrasted with the manifestations of faint-heartedness, philistinism, and every kind of rottenness and frailty in our ranks and the ranks of the working class. These examples must be used most extensively in educating the cadres of the labour movement.

Comrades, our Party leaders often complain that *there are no people*; that they are short of people for agitational and propaganda work, for the newspapers, the trade unions, for work among the youth, among women. Not enough, not enough—that is the cry. We simply haven't got the people. To this we could reply in the old yet eternally new words of Lenin:

*"There are no people—yet there are enormous numbers of people. There are enormous numbers of people, because the working class and ever more diverse strata of society, year after year, advance from their ranks an increasing number of discontented people who desire to protest . . . At the same time we have no people, because we have . . . no talented organizers capable of organizing extensive and at the same time uniform and harmonious work that would give employment to all forces, even the most inconsiderable."*<sup>1</sup>

These words of Lenin must be thoroughly grasped by our Parties and applied by them as a guide in their everyday work. There are plenty of people. They need only be discovered in our own organizations, during strikes and demonstrations, in various mass organizations of the workers, in united front bodies. They must be helped to grow in the course of their

<sup>1</sup>. V. I. Lenin, "What is to be done?" *Selected Works*, Vol. II.



work and struggle; they must be put in a situation where they can really be useful to the workers' cause.

Comrades, we Communists are people of action. Ours is the problem of practical struggle against the offensive of capital, against fascism and the threat of imperialist war, the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. It is precisely this *practical* task that obliges Communist cadres to equip themselves *with revolutionary theory*. For, as Stalin, that greatest master of revolutionary action, teaches us, theory gives those engaged in practical work the power of orientation, clarity of vision, assurance in work, belief in the triumph of our cause.

But real revolutionary theory is irreconcilably hostile to all emasculated theorizing, all barren play with abstract definitions. *Our theory is not a dogma, but a guide to action*, Lenin used to say. It is *such* a theory that our cadres need, and they need it as badly as they need their daily bread, as they need air or water.

Whoever really wishes to rid our work of deadening, cut-and-dried schemes, of pernicious scholasticism, must burn them out with a red-hot iron, both by *practical*, active struggle waged together with and at the head of the masses, and by *untiring effort* to master the mighty, fertile, all-powerful teaching of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin.

In this connection I consider it particularly necessary to draw your attention to the work of our *Party schools*. It is not pedants, moralizers or adepts at quoting that our schools must train. No! It is practical front-rank fighters in the cause of the working class that must leave their walls—people who are front-rank fighters not only because of their boldness and readiness for self-sacrifice, but also because they see further than rank-and-file workers and know better than they the path that leads to the emancipation of the working people. All sections of the Communist International must without any dilly-dallying seriously take up the question of the proper organization of Party schools, in order to turn them into *smithies* where these fighting cadres are forged.

The principal task of our Party schools, it seems to me, is to teach the Party and Young Communist League members there how to apply the Marxist-Leninist method to the concrete situation in particular countries, to definite conditions, not to the struggle against an enemy "in general"

but against a particular, definite enemy. This makes necessary a study of not merely the letter of Leninism, but its living revolutionary spirit.

There are two ways of training cadres in our Party schools:

First method: teaching people abstract theory, trying to give them the greatest possible dose of dry learning, coaching them how to write theses and resolutions in literary style, and only incidentally touching upon the problems of the particular country, of the particular labour movement, its history and traditions, and the experience of the Communist Party in question. Only incidentally!

Second method: theoretical training in which mastering the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism is based on a practical study by the student of the key problems of the struggle of the proletariat in his own country. On returning to his practical work, the student will then be able to find his bearings independently, and *become an independent practical organizer and leader capable of leading the masses in battle against the class enemy.*

Not all graduates of our Party schools prove to be suitable. There are many phrases, abstractions, a good deal of book knowledge and show of learning. But we need real, truly Bolshevik organizers and leaders of the masses. And we need them badly this very day. It does not matter if such students cannot write good theses (though we need that very much, too), but they must know how to organize and lead, undaunted by difficulties, capable of surmounting them.

Revolutionary theory is the generalized, *summarized experience* of the revolutionary movement. Communists must carefully utilize in their countries not only the experience of the past but also the experience of the present struggle of other detachments of the international labour movement. However, correct utilization of experience does not by any means denote *mechanical transposition* of ready-made forms and methods of struggle from one set of conditions to another, from one country to another, as so often happens in our Parties.

Bare imitation, simple copying of methods and forms of work, even of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in countries where capitalism is still supreme, may with the best of intentions result in harm rather than good, as has so often actually been the case. It is precisely from the experience of the Russian Bolsheviks that we must learn to apply effectually,



to the specific conditions of life in each country, the *single international line*; in the struggle against capitalism we must learn pitilessly to cast aside, pillory and hold up to general ridicule all *phrasemongering, use of hackneyed formulas, pedantry and doctrinairism*.

It is necessary to learn, comrades, to learn always, at every step, in the course of the struggle, at liberty and in jail. To learn and to fight, to fight and to learn. We must be able to combine the great teaching of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin *with Stalinist firmness* at work and in struggle, *with Stalinist irreconcilability on matters of principle* toward the class enemy and deviators from the Bolshevik line, *with Stalinist fearlessness in face of difficulties, with Stalinist revolutionary realism*.

\* \* \*

Comrades! Never has any international congress of Communists aroused such keen interest on the part of world public opinion as we witness now in regard to our present Congress. We may say without fear of exaggeration that there is not a single serious newspaper, not a single political party, not a single more or less serious political or social leader that is not following the course of our Congress with the closest attention.

The eyes of millions of workers, peasants, small townspeople, office workers and intellectuals, of colonial peoples and oppressed nationalities are turned toward Moscow, the great capital of the *first* but not *last* state of the international proletariat. In this we see a confirmation of the enormous importance and urgency of the questions discussed at the Congress and of its decisions. The frenzied howling of the fascists of all countries, particularly of rabid German fascism, only confirms us in the belief that our decisions have indeed hit the mark.

In the dark night of bourgeois reaction and fascism in which the class enemy is endeavouring to keep the working masses of the capitalist countries, the Communist International, the international Party of the Bolsheviks, stands out like a beacon, showing all mankind the one way to emancipation from the yoke of capitalism, from fascist barbarity and the horrors of imperialist war.

The establishment of unity of action of the working class is the *decisive* stage on that road. Yes, unity of action by the organizations of the work-

ing class of every trend, the consolidation of its forces in all spheres of its activity and at all sectors of the class struggle.

The working class must achieve the *unity of its trade unions*. In vain do some reformist trade union leaders attempt to frighten the workers with the spectre of a trade union democracy destroyed by the interference of the Communist Parties in the affairs of the united trade unions, by the existence of Communist fractions within the trade unions.

To depict us Communists as opponents of trade union democracy is sheer nonsense. We advocate and consistently uphold the right of the trade unions to decide their problems for themselves. We are even prepared to forego the creation of Communist fractions in the trade unions if that is necessary in the interests of trade union unity. We are prepared to come to an agreement about the independence of the united trade unions from all political parties. But we are decidedly opposed to any *dependence* of the trade unions on the bourgeoisie, and do not give up our basic point of view that it is impermissible for trade unions to adopt a neutral position in regard to the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

The working class must strive to secure the *union* of all forces of the working-class youth and of all organizations of the anti-fascist youth, and win over that section of the working youth which has come under the demoralizing influence of fascism and other enemies of the people.

The working class must and will achieve unity of action in all fields of the labour movement. This will come about the sooner, the more firmly and resolutely we Communists and revolutionary workers of all capitalist countries apply in practice the new tactical line adopted by our Congress in relation to the most important urgent questions of the international labour movement.

We know that there are many difficulties ahead. Our path is not a smooth asphalt road; our path is not strewn with roses. The working class will have to overcome many an obstacle, including obstacles in its own midst; it faces the task above all of reducing to naught the disruptive machinations of the reactionary elements of Social-Democracy. Many are the sacrifices that will be exacted under the hammer blows of bourgeois reaction and fascism. The revolutionary ship of the proletariat will have to steer



its course through a multitude of submerged rocks before it reaches its port.

But the working class in the capitalist countries is today no longer what it was in 1914, at the beginning of the imperialist war, nor what it was in 1918, at the end of the war. The working class has behind it twenty years of rich experience and revolutionary trials, bitter lessons of a number of defeats, especially in Germany, Austria and Spain.

The working class has before it the inspiring example of the Soviet Union, the country of socialism victorious, an example of how the class enemy can be defeated, how the working class can establish its own government and build socialist society.

The bourgeoisie no longer holds *undivided* dominion over the whole expanse of the world. Now *the victorious working class* rules over one-sixth of the globe, and Soviets control a vast stretch of territory in the great land of China.

The working class possesses a firm, well-knit revolutionary vanguard, the Communist International. It has a tried and recognized, a great and wise leader—*Stalin*.

The whole course of historical development, comrades, favours the cause of the working class. In vain are the efforts of the reactionaries, the fascists of every hue, the entire world bourgeoisie, to turn back the wheel of history. No, that wheel is turning forward and will continue to turn forward towards a worldwide Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, until the final victory of socialism throughout the world.

*There is but one thing that the working class of the capitalist countries still lacks—unity in its own ranks.*

So let the battle cry of the Communist International, the clarion call of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin, ring out all the more loudly from this platform to the whole world:

*Workers of all countries, unite!*

*August, 1935.*

# RESULTS OF THE CONGRESS

## CONCLUDING SPEECH

Comrades, the work of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, the Congress of the Communists of all countries, of all continents of the world, is coming to a close.

What are the results of this Congress, what is its significance for our movement, for the working class of the world, for the working people of every country?

It has been the Congress of the *complete triumph of unity between the proletariat of the country of victorious socialism, the Soviet Union, and the proletariat of the capitalist countries which is still fighting for its liberation*. The victory of socialism in the Soviet Union—a victory of world-historic significance—gives rise in all capitalist countries to a powerful movement toward socialism. This victory strengthens the cause of peace among peoples, enhancing as it does the international importance of the Soviet Union and its role as the mighty bulwark of the working people in their struggle against capital, against reaction and fascism. It strengthens the Soviet Union as the base of the world proletarian revolution. It sets in motion throughout the whole world not only the workers, who are turning more and more to communism, but also millions of peasants and farmers, and hardworking small townsfolk, a considerable proportion of the intellectuals and the enslaved people of the colonies. It inspires them to struggle, increases their bonds of unity with the great fatherland of all the working people and strengthens their determination to support and defend the proletarian state against all its enemies.

This victory of socialism increases the confidence of the international proletariat in its own forces and in the real possibility of its own victory, a confidence which is itself becoming a tremendously effective force against the rule of the bourgeoisie.

The union of forces of the proletariat of the Soviet Union and of the militant proletariat and masses of working people in the capitalist countries holds out the great perspective of the oncoming collapse of capital-



ism and the guarantee of the victory of socialism throughout the whole world.

Our Congress has *laid the foundations for such a wide mobilization of the forces of all working people against capitalism as has never before existed in the history of the working-class struggle.*

Our Congress has set before the international proletariat, as its most important immediate task, that of consolidating its forces politically and organizationally, of putting an end to the isolation to which it had been reduced by the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, of rallying the working people around the working class in a wide People's Front against the offensive of capital and reaction, against fascism and the threat of war in each individual country and in the international arena.

We have not invented this task. It has been prompted by the experience of the world labour movement itself, above all, by the experience of the proletariat of France. The great merit of the French Communist Party is that it grasped the need of the *hour*, that it paid no heed to the sectarians who tried to pull the Party hither and thither and hamper the realization of the united front of struggle against fascism, but acted boldly and in a Bolshevik fashion, and, by its pact with the Socialist Party providing for joint action, prepared the united front of the proletariat as the basis for the anti-fascist People's Front now in the making. By this action, which accords with the vital interests of all the working people, the French workers, both Communists and Socialists, have once more advanced the French labour movement to first place, to a *leading position* in capitalist Europe, and have shown that they are worthy successors of the Communards, worthy inheritors of the glorious legacy of the Paris Commune.

It is the great service of the French Communist Party and the French proletariat that by their fighting against fascism in a united proletarian front they helped to prepare the decisions of our Congress, which are of such tremendous importance for the workers of all countries.

But what has been done in France constitutes only initial steps. Our Congress, in mapping out the tactical line for the years immediately ahead, could not confine itself to merely recording this experience. It went further.

We Communists are a class party, a proletarian party. But as the van-

guard of the proletariat we are ready to organize joint actions between the proletariat and the other sections of the working people interested in the fight against fascism. We Communists are a revolutionary party; but we are ready to undertake joint action with other parties fighting against fascism.

We Communists have other ultimate aims than these parties, but in struggling for our aims we are ready to fight jointly for any immediate tasks which when realized will weaken the position of fascism and strengthen the position of the proletariat.

We Communists employ methods of struggle which differ from those of the other parties; but, while using our own methods in combating fascism, we Communists will also support the methods of struggle used by other parties, however inadequate they may seem, if these methods are really directed against fascism.

We are ready to do all this because in countries of bourgeois democracy we want to block the way of reaction and the offensive of capital and fascism, prevent the abolition of bourgeois-democratic liberties, forestall fascism's terrorist vengeance upon the proletariat and the revolutionary section of the peasantry and intellectuals, and save the young generation from physical and spiritual degeneracy.

We are ready to do all this because in the fascist countries we want to prepare and hasten the overthrow of fascist dictatorship.

We are ready to do all this *because we want to save the world from fascist barbarity and the horrors of imperialist war.*

\* \* \*

[Here Comrade Weber, a delegate of the German Communist Party, mounted the platform and presented Comrade Dimitrov with an album, saying the following words:

“Comrade Dimitrov, in the name of the delegation of the German Communist Party I deliver this book into your hands, a book of the heroic exploits of the revolutionary fighters of Germany. It was you who by your conduct at the Leipzig trial and your entire subsequent activity served as an example for the German Communist Party, for the German anti-



fascists, in their struggle. Accept this book, this record of the heroism of the proletarian fighters of Germany, to whom you have furnished an example to follow, who give up their freedom, their health, their lives in the cause of the revolution!"]

\* \* \*

Ours is a *Congress of struggle for the maintenance of peace, against the threat of imperialist war.*

We are approaching this struggle now *in a new way.* Our Congress is decidedly opposed to the fatalistic outlook on the question of imperialist war emanating from old Social-Democratic notions.

It is true that imperialist wars are the product of capitalism, that only the overthrow of capitalism will put an end to all war; but it is likewise true that the masses of working people can hinder imperialist war by their militant action.

The world today is not what it was in 1914.

Today on one-sixth of the globe there exists a powerful proletarian state that relies on the material strength of victorious socialism. Guided by Stalin's wise peace policy, the Soviet Union has already more than once brought to naught the aggressive plans of the instigators of war.

Today the world proletariat, in its struggle against war, has at its disposal not only its weapon of mass action, as it had in 1914. Today the mass struggle of the international working class against war is coupled with the influence of the Soviet Union as a state, of its powerful Red Army, the most important guardian of the peace.

Today the working class is not under the exclusive influence of Social-Democracy participating in a bloc with the bourgeoisie, as was the case in 1914. Today there is the world Communist Party, the Communist International. Today the masses of the Social-Democratic workers are turning to the Soviet Union, to its policy of peace, to a united front with the Communists.

Today the peoples of the colonial and semi-colonial countries do not regard their liberation as a hopeless cause. On the contrary, they are passing on more and more to determined struggle against the imperialist enslavers. The best evidence of this is the *Soviet revolution in China* and the heroic feats of the Red Army of the Chinese people.

The people's hatred of war is constantly gaining in depth and intensity. In pushing the working people into the abyss of imperialist wars, the bourgeoisie is staking its head. Today not only the working class, the peasantry and other working people, but also the oppressed nations and the weak peoples whose independence is menaced by new wars champion the cause of the preservation of peace. Even some of the big capitalist states, afraid of losing in a new redivision of the world, are *at the present stage* interested in avoiding war.

This gives rise to the possibility of forming a very wide united front of the working class, of all working people and whole nations against the threat of imperialist war. Basing itself on the peace policy of the Soviet Union and on the will for peace of millions upon millions of working people, our Congress has opened up the perspective of developing a wide anti-war front not only for the Communist vanguard but for the working class of the whole world, and for the peoples of every land. The extent to which this world-wide front is realized and comes into operation will determine whether the fascist and other imperialist instigators of war will be able in the near future to kindle a new imperialist war, or whether their fiendish hands will be hacked off by the axe of a powerful anti-war front.

Ours is a Congress of the *unity of the working class*, a Congress of struggle for the united proletarian front.

We entertain no illusions about easily overcoming the difficulties which the reactionary section of the Social-Democratic leaders will place in the path of realizing a united proletarian front. But we do not fear these difficulties. For we reflect the will of millions of workers; for we serve the interests of the proletariat best by fighting for a united front; for the united front is the surest road to the overthrow of fascism and the capitalist system, to the prevention of imperialist war.

At this Congress we have raised high the banner of *trade union unity*. The Communists do not insist on the independent existence of the Red trade unions at all costs. But Communists want trade union unity based on the class struggle and on putting an end, once and for all, to a situation in which the most consistent and determined advocates of trade union unity and of the class struggle are expelled from the trade unions of the International Federation of Trade Unions.



We know that not all of the functionaries of the trade unions affiliated to the Red International of Labour Unions have understood and assimilated this line of the Congress. There are still remnants of sectarian self-satisfaction which these functionaries, with our support, must overcome if the line of the Congress is to be carried out firmly. But we shall carry out this line whatever the cost, and shall find a common language with our class brothers, our comrades in the struggle, the workers at present affiliated to the International Federation of Trade Unions.

At this Congress we have adopted a course for the formation of a *single mass political party* of the working class, for putting an end to the political split in the ranks of the proletariat, a split caused by the class collaboration policy of Social-Democracy. For us the political unity of the working class is not a manoeuvre but a question of the future fate of the entire labour movement. Should there be any people in our midst who approach the question of the political unity of the working class as a manoeuvre, we shall fight them as people who cause harm to the working class. Precisely because our attitude on this question is one of absolute seriousness and sincerity, dictated by the interests of the proletariat, we lay down definite fundamental conditions to serve as the basis for such unity. We have not invented these fundamental conditions. They are the result of the experience gained from the sufferings of the proletariat in the course of its struggles. They are also in accordance with the will of millions of Social-Democratic workers, a will engendered by the lessons of the defeats suffered. These fundamental conditions have been tested by the experience of the entire revolutionary labour movement.

Since proletarian unity has been the keynote of our Congress, it has been not only a Congress of the Communist vanguard, but a Congress of the entire international working class thirsting for militant trade union and political unity.

Though our Congress was not attended by delegates of the Social-Democratic workers nor by non-party delegates, and though the workers forced into the fascist organizations were not represented, the Congress has spoken not only for the Communists but also for these millions of workers. It has expressed the thoughts and feelings of the overwhelming majority of the working class. If the labour organizations of various trends

were to hold a really free discussion of our decisions among the workers of the whole world, there is no doubt in our minds but that they would support the decisions for which you, comrades, have voted with such unanimity.

So much the more is it our duty as Communists to make the decisions of our Congress in actual fact the property of the whole working class. To have voted for these decisions is not enough. Nor is it enough to popularize them among the members of the Communist Parties. We want the workers belonging to the parties of the Second International and the International Federation of Trade Unions as well as the workers belonging to organizations of other political trends to discuss these decisions jointly with us, to bring in their amendments and make practical proposals; we want them to deliberate jointly with us as to how these decisions can best be carried into effect, how they, jointly with us, hand in hand, can best realize these decisions in practice.

Ours has been a Congress of a *new tactical orientation for the Communist International*.

Standing firmly on the impregnable position of Marxism-Leninism, which has been confirmed by the whole experience of the international labour movement, and above all by the victory of the great October Revolution, our Congress, acting in the spirit and guided by the method of *living Marxism-Leninism*, has re-examined the tactical lines of the Communist International to meet the changed world situation.

The Congress has adopted a firm decision that the united front tactics must be applied *in a new way*. The Congress emphatically demands that Communists shall not content themselves with propagating general slogans about proletarian dictatorship and Soviet power, but that they shall pursue a definite, active, Bolshevik policy on all internal and foreign political questions arising in their country, on all urgent problems that affect the vital interests of the working class, their own nation and the international labour movement. The Congress insists most emphatically that all tactical steps taken by the Communist Parties be based on a sober analysis of actual conditions, on a consideration of the relation of class forces and of the political level of the widest masses. The Congress demands that every relic of *sectarianism* be abolished from the practice of the Communist



movement, as this represents at present the greatest obstacle in the way of the Communist Parties carrying out a real Bolshevik mass policy.

While inspired by the determination to carry out this tactical line and by the conviction that this road will lead our Parties to big successes, the Congress has at the same time taken into account the possibility that the carrying out of this Bolshevik line may not always be smooth sailing, may not always proceed without mistakes, without deviations here and there to the Right or the "Left"—deviations either in the direction of *adaptation and trailing behind events*, or in the direction of *sectarian self-isolation*. Which of these, "speaking generally," constitutes the main danger is a dispute in which only scholastics can engage. The greater and worse danger is that which at any given moment and in any given country represents the greater obstacle to the carrying out of the line of our Congress, to the development of the correct mass policy of the Communist Parties.

The cause of communism demands, not abstract, but *concrete struggle against deviations*; prompt and determined rebuff to all harmful tendencies as they arise, and the timely rectification of mistakes. To replace the necessary concrete struggle against deviations by a peculiar *sport*—hunting imaginary deviations or deviators—is an intolerably harmful distortion. In our Party practice every encouragement must be given to develop initiative in formulating new questions. We must assist in having the questions concerning the activity of the Party discussed from every angle, and not hastily set down as some deviation every doubt or critical remark of a Party member concerning the practical problems of the movement. A comrade who has committed an error must be given an opportunity to correct it in practice, and *only those who stubbornly persist in their mistakes and those who disorganize the Party are to be flayed without mercy*.

Championing, as we do, the unity of the working class, we shall with so much the more energy and irreconcilability fight for *unity within our Parties*. There can be no room in our ranks for factions, or for factional intrigue. Anyone who tries to break the iron unity of our ranks by any kind of factionalism will be made to feel what is meant by the Bolshevik discipline that Lenin and Stalin have always taught us. Let this be a warning to those few elements in individual Parties who think that they can take advantage of the difficulties of their Party, the wounds of defeat or the blows of the

raging enemy, to carry out their factional plans, and to further their own group interests. *The Party is above everything else! To guard the Bolshevik unity of the Party as the apple of one's eye is the first and highest law of Bolshevism!*

Ours is a Congress of *Bolshevik self-criticism and of the strengthening of the leadership of the Communist International and its Sections.*

We are not afraid of pointing out openly mistakes, weaknesses and shortcomings in our ranks, for we are a revolutionary Party which knows that it can develop, grow and accomplish its tasks only if it discards everything hindering its development as a revolutionary Party.

And the work which the Congress has accomplished by its merciless criticism of self-satisfied sectarianism, cut-and-dried schemes and stereotyped practices, sluggishness of thought, substitution of the methods of leading a Party for the methods of leading masses—all this work must be continued in an appropriate manner in all Parties, locally, in all links of our movement, as this is one of the most essential pre-conditions for correctly carrying into life the decisions of the Congress.

In its resolution on the report of the Executive Committee, the Congress resolved to concentrate the *day-to-day leadership* of our movement in the sections themselves. This makes it our duty to intensify in every way the work of forming and training cadres and of reinforcing the Communist Parties with genuine Bolshevik leaders, so that at abrupt turns of events the Parties can quickly and independently find correct solutions for the political and tactical problems of the Communist movement, on the basis of the decisions of the Congresses of the Communist International and the Plenums of its Executive Committee. The Congress, when electing the leading bodies of the Communist International, strove to constitute its leadership of such people as accept the new lines and decisions of the Congress and are ready and able firmly to carry them into life, not from a sense of discipline, but out of deep conviction.

It is likewise necessary in each country to ensure the correct application of the decisions adopted by the Congress. This will depend primarily on appropriately testing, distributing and directing the cadres. We know that this is not an easy task. It must be borne in mind that some of our cadres did not go through the experience of Bolshevik mass policy, but were brought up largely along the lines of general propaganda. We must do



everything to help our cadres to adapt themselves, to be retrained in a new spirit, in the spirit of the decisions of this Congress. But where the *old wine-skins* prove unsuited for the *new wine*, the necessary conclusions must be drawn—not to spill the *new wine* or spoil it by pouring it into the *old wine-skins*, but to replace the *old wine-skins* by *new ones*.

Comrades, we intentionally excluded from the reports as well as from the decisions of the Congress *high-sounding phrases* on the revolutionary perspective. We did this not because we have any ground for appraising the tempo of revolutionary development less optimistically than before, but because we want to rid our Parties of any inclination to replace Bolshevik activity by revolutionary phrasemongering or barren disputes about the appraisal of the perspective. Waging a decisive struggle against any reliance on spontaneity, we take account of the process of development of the revolution not as passive observers, but as active participants in this process. As a Party of revolutionary action—fulfilling at every stage of the movement the tasks that are in the interest of the revolution, the tasks that correspond to the specific conditions of the given stage, and soberly taking into consideration the political level of the wide mass of working people—we accelerate, more than in any other way, the creation of the subjective pre-conditions necessary for the victory of the proletarian revolution.

Marx said:

*"We must take things as we find them, that is, must utilize revolutionary sentiments in a manner corresponding to the changed circumstances."*<sup>1</sup>

This is the gist of the matter. This we must never forget.

Comrades: *The decisions of the World Congress must be brought home to the masses, must be explained to the masses, must be applied as a guide to action by the masses, in short, must be made the flesh and blood of millions of working people!*

It is necessary to strengthen everywhere to the utmost degree *the initiative of the workers in their respective localities, the initiative of the lower organizations of the Communist Parties and the labour movement in carrying out these decisions.*

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<sup>1</sup>. Marx, Letter to Kugelmann, August 23, 1866.

When leaving here, the representatives of the revolutionary proletariat must bring to their respective countries the firm conviction that we Communists bear responsibility for the fate of the working class, of the labour movement, responsibility for the fate of our own nation, for the fate of all toiling humanity.

To us, the workers, and not the social parasites and idlers, belongs the world—a world built by the hands of the workers. The present rulers of the capitalist world are but *temporary* rulers.

The proletariat is the *real* master, *tomorrow's* master of the world. And it must enter upon its historical rights, take into its hands the reins of government in every country all over the world.

*We are disciples of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin.* We must be worthy of our great teachers.

*With Stalin at their head the millions of our political army, overcoming all difficulties and courageously breaking through all barriers, must and will level to the ground the fortress of capitalism and achieve the victory of socialism throughout the whole world!*

August, 1935



### III

## THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE.

### UNITED ACTION OF THE PROLETARIAT.

*SPEECH TO MAY DAY FOREIGN WORKERS' DELEGATION.*

Comrades, you have come from capitalist countries to the land of the proletarian dictatorship — the Soviet Union — which is the first but not the last state of the world proletariat.

You have the opportunity, and you will continue to have this opportunity, to see with your own eyes the tremendous difference between the conditions of the working class there, where capital and fascism rule, and here, where the working class, having overthrown the bourgeoisie, is now victoriously building socialism under the leadership of the glorious Bolshevik Party, at the head of which stands Comrade Stalin, the great leader of the world proletariat.

The Red Flag of the proletarian revolution waves victoriously over one-sixth of the earth. Over one-sixth of the globe workers and peasants, and not capitalists and landlords, are in power. Millions of Soviet men and women, workers and collective farmers of this great and immense Soviet fatherland are transforming the old, dark, backward tsarist-landlord Russia into a land of the latest technique, mechanization and industrialisation, into a land of socialism.

You see with your own eyes *what* the working class has been able to achieve once it has taken power. You saw on the Red Square on May First the powerful armed forces of the Soviet Union — our glorious Red Army — the strength of the working class, the strength of the land of the Soviets.

When you were with us on the Red Square and we watched the tanks filing past us, and the airplanes flying over us — we saw not only the armed power of the working class of the Soviet Union, but also the strength and power of the revolutionary proletariat throughout the world.

Comrades, the Soviet state is the state of the proletariat, and the Soviet

state defends the interests of the workers, toilers and oppressed peoples of the whole world. The interests of the Soviet state are the interests of the world proletariat.

When our Russian brothers and sisters build socialism through socialist emulation and shock-work, through persistent, creative work, they are working and creating not only for their own country, but also for the world proletariat.

When they strengthen the fighting power of the Red Army, they strengthen not only the power of the Soviet Union, but also the power of the world proletariat.

The Soviet Union and its Red Army are strongholds for peace among the peoples. The Soviet Union is the citadel of the world proletarian revolution.

When the reactionary Social-Democratic leaders say and write: "We do not want to enter into a united front with the Communists because we do not want to receive orders from Moscow," they only prove that they are against the state of the proletariat. They prove thereby that they have connections with the bourgeoisie, that they support the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie and that they are ready to aid the class enemy of the proletariat.

To every sincere worker in France or England, America or Australia, Germany or Spain, China or Japan, the Balkan countries or the Canary Islands — to every sincere worker, Moscow is *his own Moscow*. The Soviet Union is *his own state*. Our opponents very often set up a howl about "Orders from Moscow." Moscow does not, of course, issue any orders. To receive "orders" from Moscow, i.e., to follow the example of the great Lenin and the great Stalin, means salvation to the world proletariat.

If you, while you are here in our great fatherland, take a look at the world working class movement as a whole, you will see two basic and outstanding directions or currents in this world working class movement.

On the one hand, there is the revolutionary section of the proletariat which has already been established in its own state — the Soviet Union. The Communists and the revolutionary workers of all countries feel themselves connected with the Soviet proletariat, with the Soviet state, by the ties of a united militant front throughout the world.



On the other hand, there is another direction, another current in the labour movement. This is the so-called reformist current, the direction which is still dominant in the Second International. There is no proletarian state, no Soviet power, no Red Army, no fighting power of the world proletariat there. But there, for example, Vandervelde and other leaders who collaborate with the capitalists sit in the governments together with the bourgeois parties. They are connected with their national bourgeoisie and support the policy of "their" bourgeoisie. In this camp there is no unity, no international discipline.

In the revolutionary section of the world proletariat a common international discipline prevails. The actions of the Bolshevik Party of the Soviet Union correspond to the interests of the toilers of France, as well as of Germany, America and the other countries. And what the French, English, American, Japanese or Chinese Communists undertake to do is never in contradiction to the interests of the Soviet Union.

*Here*, in the revolutionary section of the world proletariat, leadership is in the hands of the Communist International, which unites the millions of proletarians of the whole world who are linked together by a powerful common idea, by a single will, by a common leadership, a common discipline.

*There* — you have a many-tongued babel of confusion.

But, comrades, a process of differentiation and revolutionisation of the working masses is going on in the ranks of the Social-Democratic Parties. The number of those who are for a united front with the Communists is growing.

At the present time, when we are face to face with the menace of fascism and war, the basic task facing all toilers is to establish a united proletarian front, united action of the working class against their class enemy.

Comrades! Remember how for three months during the Leipzig trial frame-up a struggle was waged between communism and fascism. A united front was created on a world-wide scale in connection with the Leipzig trial, in defence of the innocent Communists, although formally no pact had been concluded. Communists, Social-Democrats, Anarchists and non-party toilers came out against German fascism. Millions and millions of working men and working women followed the struggle at

Leipzig day in and day out. Millions and millions of the petty bourgeoisie, peasantry and intellectuals were on the side of the united anti-fascist front. Even the bourgeois newspapers, conservative hostile newspapers, did not dare to write against us and our speeches at the trial. At this time German fascism was isolated. Hitler, Goering and Goebbels could not find moral support in Germany or in any other country.

The united front movement has made further progress since the Leipzig trial. We now have a formal agreement between the French Communist Party and the French Socialist Party for united action, an agreement between the Italian Communists and the Italian Socialists, and agreements concluded by a number of Communist Parties with Socialist organizations, as well as with a number of anti-fascist organizations.

The united proletarian front is advancing, is gathering ever greater strength, but on its path it encounters tremendous difficulties and the resistance of its enemies. All who are connected with the bourgeoisie and do not want to give up these connections are enemies of the united front.

Comrades! As soon as the resistance of these reactionary Social-Democratic leaders has been broken, and the united front of the working class established, from that moment an indestructible barrier will have been created against the capitalist offensive, against the offensive of reaction and fascism.

The working class will be able to display all its strength only if it brings about unity of action.

The economic, social, cultural and political interests of the workers of all the various political tendencies — be they Communist workers, Social-Democratic workers or Anarchist workers — are the same. On this basis, therefore, it is necessary and possible to establish the united front.

Who is hindering this?

The united front of the proletariat is hindered by the reactionary leaders of Social-Democracy, by Social-Democratic ideology and the Social-Democratic policy of class-collaboration with the bourgeoisie. This stumbling block must be eliminated. We Communists know that this is a difficult task, that it is not so easy to do away with these obstacles. But we are convinced that by means of daily struggle and persistent work the united proletarian front, the unity of the class trade unions and the united

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revolutionary party of the proletariat will ultimately be created in all countries.

Comrades! When you, as the delegation of workers from capitalist countries, have been convinced, by what you have seen with your own eyes, of the correctness of the Leninist-Stalinist path, of the path followed by the Communist International, you will not fail to tell your brothers and sisters in the capitalist countries the whole truth about the Soviet Union, and to struggle persistently and continuously in defence of the proletarian fatherland and for the final establishment of the united proletarian front. Convey to the toilers of *your countries* our warm revolutionary, Bolshevik greetings, and tell all the Social-Democratic workers that anyone who does not support the united front now, who does not struggle for united action by the working class, who tolerates a campaign against the Soviet Union, against the fatherland of the world proletariat, anyone who supports the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie — is an enemy of the interests of the working class, an accomplice of reaction and fascism and an assistant to the firebrands of imperialist war.

Let us all, Communists, Social-Democrats and all other workers, in full harmony, hand in hand, struggle together against fascism, and for the liberation of the thousands and thousands of prisoners held by capital and fascism, for the liberation of Thaelmann, Rakosi, Tom Mooney and of all revolutionary anti-fascists who are languishing in prisons and concentration camps in the capitalist countries.

Let us struggle together against the enemies of united action by the working class!

Let us struggle together for the final victory of socialism throughout the world!

Long live united action by the working class in every country and on an international scale!

Long live the victory of the world proletarian revolution!

*May, 1935.*

## THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE

### I

Never since 1914 has the menace of a world war been so great as it is now. And never has it been so necessary to mobilise all forces to avert this calamity which threatens all mankind. But to do this, one must first of all realise from where the danger is arising, who are responsible for it, and against which countries the attack is being directed.

It would not be correct to think that the war which is approaching threatens the Soviet Union alone or even the Soviet Union in the first place. As a matter of fact the occupation of the Rhineland by Hitler's armies is a direct threat to France, Belgium and other European countries; it is also a fact that Hitler's immediate plans of conquest are directed toward the seizure of territories in neighbouring countries where there is a German population.

Whereas Hitler talks to-day about the "sovereignty of Germany" he will talk to-morrow about the "sovereignty of all the Germans". Under this slogan he will try to carry out the annexation of Austria, the destruction of Czechoslovakia as an independent state, the occupation of Alsace-Lorraine, Danzig, the southern part of Denmark, Memel, etc. And this is quite easy to understand. It is much easier for German fascism to send an army first of all to seize the territory of neighbouring countries under the slogan of the "national unity of all the Germans," and only later to fight against the powerful land of the Soviets. German fascism, in strengthening its positions on the Rhine, also threatens the independence of the Polish people, in spite of the fact that the present rulers of Poland are its allies.

As far as the Far East is concerned, there can be no doubt that a *direct* blow is aimed at the Chinese people, although the fascist military clique of Japan are preparing for war against the Soviet Union and have an agreement with Berlin for this eventuality. Japan has already occupied Manchuria and is now occupying one province of China after another. Japanese imperialism is striving by this means to subject all the peoples of



Asia, including India, and to seize the Philippines and Australia. It is preparing for a decisive encounter with the United States and Great Britain.

Hence it is clear that the peoples of the West would commit a fatal error if they allowed themselves to be lulled by the illusion that the fascist warmongers in Europe and the Far East do not threaten them. In particular, the people of the countries neighbouring on Germany have food for serious thought regarding the defence of their independence and liberty.

As is well known, the fundamental cause of imperialist wars lies in capitalism itself, in its predatory efforts. But in the existing international situation, the instigator of the approaching war is fascism, this mailed fist of the most aggressive and warlike forces of imperialism.

The war danger has become so immediately threatening because the road to power was not barred against German fascism at the proper moment. Having obtained power by means of an internal war against the mass of the people of its own country, fascism has grown a direct war menace to the countries of the whole world. Having enslaved its own people, it is advancing with the torch of war in its hand to attack other peoples.

The war danger has become extremely menacing for the further reason that the fascist aggressor has been allowed to enjoy a position of impunity. The war preparations of German fascism (the introduction of universal military service, the air and naval armaments) were carried out with the systematic connivance of capitalist powers and the direct assistance of British ruling circles. The passivity and wavering of the League of Nations in regard to the Japanese attack on China and the Italian aggression in Ethiopia encouraged the impudence of the aggressor.

But the growth in the aggressiveness of German fascism and of the Japanese military clique is first and foremost the result of the fact that *the international proletariat did not succeed in acting unanimously with all the power of its gigantic forces, did not rally around itself all the working people and all the friends of peace into a mighty front against war.* The resistance of the reactionary section of the leaders of the Labour and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions to the united front of

struggle has not yet been broken. But the refusal of these reactionary leaders (supporting the imperialist policy of their own bourgeoisie) to undertake united independent proletarian action against war, lulling the masses to sleep with the illusion that the League of Nations would do everything necessary for the maintenance of peace — this has hindered the struggle of the proletariat against war and paralysed its pressure on the capitalist governments.

In addition to the openly reactionary leaders who disrupt the unity of action of the international proletariat in defence of peace there are also „Left” phrasemongers who propagate fatalistic views to the effect that war is *inevitable* and the maintenance of peace *impossible*. Since the fundamental cause of war is capitalism, then, they say, so long as the latter exists, it is impossible to avoid war, and it is hopeless and useless to fight for the maintenance of peace. Such people are out-and-out doctrinaires, if not simply impostors. They see everywhere around them the raging forces of war, but they do not at all notice the mighty factors for peace.

The Soviet Union, the country of the victorious proletariat, with its consistent and resolute peace policy, is such a factor for peace. Another factor for peace is the proletariat of the capitalist countries. These are the leading forces in defending peace against the warmongers. The mass of the peasants, all working people, and the mass of the people in all capitalist countries, are also for the maintenance of peace. A number of capitalist countries at present are interested in the maintenance of peace. In the countries where fascism rules, as well as in the countries where the rulers abet the instigators of a new slaughter, the peoples do not want war.

Phrasemongering doctrinaires, such as those from the British Independent Labour Party, depict matters as if the question of war and peace depends only on the capitalist governments. Yes, this would be the case if the mass of the people were simply pawns in the hands of the governments and did not *fight* to maintain peace in spite of their governments. But that is just the point; it is radically wrong to regard the mass of the people as puppets in the hands of the government. If these masses, without whom war could not be carried on, were to act *resolutely and promptly* against the war plans of the governments, they could force these govern-



ments to renounce war and the abetting of war plotters. *The whole thing is to organise the struggle of the peoples for the maintenance of peace in good time and to carry it on continually and everywhere against the fascist warmongers and their backers.*

A united peace front is required which would include not only the working class, the peasants, the intellectuals and other working people, but also the oppressed nations and the peoples of countries whose independence is threatened by the warmongers. A peace front is required extending to all parts of the world, from Tokyo to London, from New York to Berlin, acting in coordination against the warmongers, against German fascism in Europe, against the Japanese military clique in the Far East. And this peace front will become powerful and invincible if it organises practical mass action, not restricting itself to protests, resolutions and declarations.

By economic and political measures, the warmongers should be put absolutely in a *state of siege*. They should be cornered in such a way that they are incapable of carrying out their criminal plans. The globe should be encircled with such a network of organisations of the friends of peace, such a mighty movement of international solidarity and such effective measures of a united international policy of the proletariat for the maintenance of peace, as will effectively tie the dastardly hands of the warmongers.

The fascist aggressor must be made to feel most emphatically that his every step is vigilantly watched by millions of people and that any attempt to attack other peoples will meet with the determined resistance of the proletariat and working people of the whole world.

Only the proletariat, uniting its ranks, can be the organiser of such a peace front, can be its driving force, its backbone. This is now the *central task* of the international proletariat as a whole. The success of the fight against fascism itself also depends on its successful solution.

## 2

To *want* peace is not enough. It is necessary to *fight* for peace. It is absolutely inadequate to carry on general propaganda against war. Pro-

paganda against war "in general" does not in the slightest degree hinder the conspirators sitting in Berlin or Tokyo from carrying out their dastardly work. They would be quite satisfied if the working class were to go no further than such general propaganda.

A successful struggle to maintain peace absolutely requires that the joint activity of the proletariat and the widest masses of the people be directed against the *specific instigators of war* and against those forces inside the country which help them directly or indirectly. From this point of view it is extremely important in every country to work out a definite and correct tactical line in the struggle for the maintenance of peace, taking into account the situation of the Party and the working class movement of the given country and also its internal and international situation.

In the countries where fascism is in power, the working class, putting in the forefront of its struggle against the fascist dictatorship exposure of chauvinist demagoguery and war preparations, unites all forces to avert the catastrophe into which fascism is preparing to hurl the people. When the proletariat and the masses of the people of Germany, Italy and other fascist countries fight against the power of fascism and its military aggression, they are acting not only for their own salvation, but in the interests of peace, in the interests of all peoples, of all mankind.

A particularly important question now in the tactics of the working class, especially in the countries which are directly in danger of an attack, is the attitude which should be adopted toward the foreign policy of the government and the defence of the country. To the working class and all working people it is by no means a matter of indifference what foreign policy the government carries on toward the fascist enemies of peace; whether this policy helps to strengthen collective security or to hinder it; whether the government protects the agents of the fascist aggressor or takes effective steps against them; how it treats sons of the people in the ranks of the army, in what spirit they are trained, what elements the officers of the army are composed of, whether these are reliable in the fight against the fascist enemy or whether they are fascist reactionary elements; how the population is to be protected against the horrors of war, etc.

To adopt an attitude of indifference to the question of the defence of the country, to leave this question without control in the hands of a



bourgeois government, will not in any case assist the cause of defending peace. It is no accident that the ruling section of the bourgeoisie has always looked upon this sphere as its monopoly, regarding it as a kind of "holy of holies." This monopoly of the bourgeoisie must be demolished once and for all.

The proletariat cannot get along without its own independent policy on these questions. Without on any condition permitting itself to slip into adopting the position of the bourgeoisie, the Party of the proletariat must actively interfere in foreign policy and in questions of national defence, advancing its own platform and its own demands.

As the supreme supporter of the active defence of its own people and country from fascist enslavement, the working class must closely link up the question of the defence of the country with the demands for the extension of the democratic rights of the workers and peasants and the defence of their vital interests, taking as its starting point the fact that only the democratisation of the regime, the democratisation of the army, its cleansing from fascist and other reactionary elements, and the satisfaction of the urgent demands of the workers and peasants, can strengthen the defensive capacity of the people against a fascist attack. In every concrete situation, the representatives of the working class will support such proposals and will seek to secure the carrying out of such measures as open up the greatest possibility for bringing to bear on the widest scale the pressure of the masses of the people upon the foreign policy of the government in questions of national defence. They will also support all those measures which hinder the capitulation of the bourgeois governments to the fascist aggressor and the betrayal of the independence and liberty of the people by these governments.

In case of a direct threat of war by a fascist aggressor, the Communists — emphasizing that only the proletarian power is able to ensure the reliable defence of the country and its independence, as is plainly shown by the example of the Soviet Union — will seek to bring about the formation of a *People's Front government*. Such a government, taking determined steps against fascism and the reactionary elements in the country, against the agents and backers of the enemies of peace, and ensuring the control of the organised masses over the defence of the country, will assist

in raising the capacity of the people for defence against a fascist aggressor.

Since to-day the power is in the hands of bourgeois governments which are no guarantee for the genuine defence of the country and which used the armed forces of the state against the working people, the party of the working class cannot take any political responsibility for the defensive measure of these governments, and therefore opposes the war policy of the government and the military budget as a whole. This does not exclude abstention from voting in particular cases, giving the reason for doing so, on those various measures of a defensive character which are necessary to hinder the attack of a fascist aggressor (e.g., the fortification of frontiers), of voting and speaking *for* measures dictated by the interests of the defence of the population against the horrors of war (gas shelters, gas masks, Red Cross work, etc.).

The time has gone by when the working class did not participate *independently and actively* in deciding such vital questions as war and peace. The difference between Communists and reformists, between revolutionary and reactionary leaders of the working class movement, is not at all that the latter participate in deciding these questions while we revolutionaries remain aloof. No! The difference is that on these questions, as on other questions, reformists defend the interests of the capitalists, while revolutionaries defend the interests of working people, the interests of the people as a whole.

These flexible Bolshevik tactics, which are the application of the general tactical line of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International to a specific question, arise of necessity from the whole present-day international situation, particularly from the existence of definite fascist aggressors.

It is really ridiculous when "Left" phrasemongers of various kinds oppose these tactics, adopting the pose of irreconcilable revolutionaries. If we are to believe them, *all* governments are aggressors. They even quote Lenin, who, during the imperialist war of 1914–18, correctly rejected the argument of the social chauvinists that "we were attacked and we are defending ourselves." But the world at that time was divided into two military-imperialist coalitions which were equally striving to establish their world hegemony, and which had equally prepared and provoked the



imperialist war. At that time there were neither countries where the proletariat had conquered nor countries with a fascist dictatorship.

But now the situation is different. Now we have: (1) a proletarian state which is the greatest bulwark of peace; (2) definite fascist aggressors; (3) a number of countries which are in direct danger of attack by fascist aggressors and in danger of losing their state and national independence; (4) other capitalist governments which are interested at the present moment in the maintenance of peace. It is, therefore, completely wrong now to depict *all* countries as aggressors. Only people who are trying to conceal the real aggressors could so distort the facts.

## 3

The peace which exists at present is a bad peace. But in any case this bad peace is better than war. And every consistent supporter of peace will understand at once the need to support all measures which assist in maintaining it, including the measures of the League of Nations, particularly sanctions. Sanctions can be made into an effective means against an aggressor.

If the sanctions undertaken by the League of Nations did not prevent Italy continuing the war against Ethiopia, this is not an argument against sanctions but against the powers which frustrated their application.

And if German fascism to-day is throwing out a challenge to the peoples of the whole world, this is precisely because it reckons on freedom from punishment, because sanctions were not applied to Japan, because the sanctions against Italy were frustrated by the capitalist states, because, finally, when Hitler sent his troops to the frontiers of France and Belgium he was convinced in advance that sanctions against him would be frustrated by the British bourgeoisie.

It is said that the application of sanctions increases the war danger and will lead to war. This is not true. It is just the opposite, the *impunity of the aggressor* increases the danger of war. The more resolutely sanctions of an economic and financial character are applied to a fascist aggressor (complete refusal of credits, stopping commerce and the supply of raw material), the less will German fascism be inclined to begin a war, because the greater will be the risk to it.

The League of Nations must be ruthlessly criticised for its irresoluteness, passivity, inconsistency. The working class wages an irreconcilable struggle against the governments of those imperialist countries, members of the League of Nations, which help the aggressor for the sake of their own selfish interests, disrupt measures for preserving peace and sacrifice the interests of small nations to the interests of the big imperialist powers. But it does not follow that we should in general take up a negative position toward the League of Nations. What interest has the proletariat in playing into the hands of the warmongers, all of whom are at present against the League of Nations? The League of Nations has been deserted by the chief instigators of war, Germany and Japan. The League of Nations includes the Soviet Union, which throws all its international weight into the scales on the side of peace and collective security. In the League of Nations there are also other states that do not want to give the fascist aggressors an opportunity to attack other peoples. Those who cannot distinguish between the League of Nations in the past and the League of Nations at present, those who cannot vary their approach to the different members of the League of Nations, those who refuse to bring mass pressure to bear on the League of Nations and the various capitalist governments to secure the adoption of measures to maintain peace, such people are windbags and not revolutionaries or proletarian politicians.

The working class must support those measures of the League of Nations and various states which are really directed toward the maintenance of peace (non-aggression pacts, pacts of mutual aid against the aggressor, pacts of collective security, financial and economic sanctions). And not only must it support these measures, but by a mighty mass anti-war movement it must force the League of Nations and the governments of the various capitalist states to take serious steps in defence of peace.

It is not true that the policy of constantly yielding to the demands of the fascist warmongers by the League of Nations and by various countries (Great Britain, France, Belgium, etc.) can help to maintain peace. The workers have not forgotten that previously in the internal policy of Germany, it was precisely the concessions and capitulation to attacking fascism which paved the latter's way to power. In the international arena a similar capitulatory policy frees the hands of militant fascism for attack.



It is also not true that the cause of peace will gain from attempting at the present moment to raise the question of a redistribution of the sources of raw materials, colonies and mandated territories, as the reactionary Social-Democratic leaders are doing. In reality this is done with the aim of distracting the attention of the masses from a concrete struggle against the warmongers. On the other hand, such proposals conceal the desire to give colonies to German fascism, which is bound to strengthen still more the military position of German fascism. It is not the business of the proletariat to advocate any particular division of colonies and mandates among the imperialists. Its task is to support the struggle of the colonial peoples for their interests and their rights and for their final liberation from the imperialist yoke.

## 4

While demanding effective measures from the League of Nations and the bourgeois governments against the aggressiveness of the fascist firebrands, the proletariat must not overlook for a moment that the *chief, fundamental and decisive thing* in the maintenance of peace is the *independent action of the masses in defence of peace against the actual war incendiaries*.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that if the international proletariat, with its mass organisations, especially the trade unions, had acted in unison, and by strikes and other measures had prevented a single ship or a single train going to or from Italy, Italian fascism would long since have been forced to stop its war of plunder against the Ethiopian people.

But the formation of a really wide People's Front for peace, strong enough to carry on such a struggle against military fascism, is possible only if there exists *unity of action of the proletariat itself*. It was precisely the establishment of the unity of action of the working class which made it possible for the French and Spanish proletariat to build up a mighty anti-fascist People's Front.

Torn by internal contradictions, the London conference of the Labour and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions, under the pressure of the reactionary wing, evaded the question of the necessity for immediately bringing about unity of action of the

proletariat on a national and international scale. This conference did not call upon the working masses for independent action, but limited itself to an appeal to rely wholly on the League of Nations. It did not take a stand in defence of the Chinese people, who are being attacked by Japan. It did not condemn in the slightest degree those labour leaders and Social-Democratic leaders who defend the aggressive policy of German fascism, masking this by phrases about the "maintenance of peace."

But, simultaneously, a movement for the united front of the working class is rapidly developing of late in the ranks of the Labour and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions. The basic interests of the whole international proletariat require that these forces gain the upper hand and overcome the resistance of the opponents to the united front.

The fact that fascism, taking advantage of the discord in the parties and organisations of the working class in various countries, has gone over to a military offensive, insistently demands a *single international policy of the working class for the purpose of maintaining peace*.

To sum up, this single international policy of the proletariat can be brought about on the following basis:

1. The restoration and strengthening of real international proletarian solidarity to defend the interests of the widest masses of working people; the Social-Democratic Parties must make a decisive break with the imperialist interests of their bourgeoisie.

2. Every possible support for the peace policy of the Soviet Union, the proletarian state that stands unswervingly in defence of peace among peoples. And this presupposes in the first place a determined struggle by the working class parties against the counter-revolutionary attempts to depict the foreign policy of the Soviet Union as identical with the policy of the imperialist states and to represent the Red Army, that bulwark of peace, as being the same as the armies of imperialist states — attempts which play into the hands of the fascist warmongers.

3. The blow against the fascist aggressor must be directed with definite purpose and with concentrated force at every moment; the attitude taken toward the aggressor must be different from that taken toward the



victims of his attack; any attempt to gloss over the difference between fascist and non-fascist countries must be exposed.

4. An independent struggle by the proletariat for the maintenance of peace, independent of the capitalist governments and the League of Nations, making it impossible for the working class movement to be subordinated to the behind-the-scenes designs of the imperialist governments in the League of Nations.

Under present conditions, the fight to maintain peace is a fight against *fascism*, and this fight is in essence *revolutionary*.

The maintenance of peace is a deadly danger for fascism, because, by increasing its internal difficulties, it leads to the undermining of the fascist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The maintenance of peace helps the growth of the forces of the proletariat, the forces of revolution, helps to heal the split in the ranks of the working class movement. It helps the proletariat to become the leading class in the struggle of all working people against capitalism. It undermines the foundations of the capitalist system and hastens the victory of socialism.

“War may break out unexpectedly. Wars are not declared nowadays. They just start.” (*Stalin*). But this demands first and foremost that Communists have a clear understanding of the extent and nature of the war danger and the ways and means of overcoming it.

A decisive step at present toward establishment of unity of action of the international proletariat against the warmongers is for the Communist Parties of each separate country to develop in all fields of social and political life the most active, persistent and extensive campaign for the maintenance of peace. The Communists will carry on this campaign, not postponing it until pacts for joint activity have been signed with the leaders of the Social-Democratic Parties, but they will unfailingly carry it on from the point of view of the struggle for the establishment of unity of action between the Communist Party and the Social-Democratic Party. Communists will exert every effort to overcome the resistance of the reactionary Social-Democratic leaders to the united front and to strengthen in every way the bonds of joint struggle against the common enemy between the Communist and Social-Democratic workers.

Such a campaign, helping to draw the Communist and Social-Democratic workers closer together, will help to activate and rally all the forces of the proletariat, not only on a national but on an international scale. This will greatly assist setting into motion other strata of the working people of town and country, the masses of the petty bourgeoisie, peasants and intellectuals, all friends of peace. All this will hasten the formation of an invincible front of struggle of the international proletariat, of all toiling people, of all peoples, for the maintenance of peace.

*The struggle for peace is a struggle against fascism, a struggle against capitalism, a struggle for the victory of socialism throughout the world!*

May 1, 1936.



## THE SOVIET UNION AND THE WORKING CLASSES OF THE CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

### I

Unbounded are the joy and enthusiasm with which the millions of working people throughout the world, all fighters against capitalist spoliation, fascist barbarism and imperialist war, greet the twentieth anniversary of the great October Socialist Revolution. Honest supporters of democracy, progress and peace, the best people of science, culture and art in all countries, greet the twentieth anniversary of the existence of the first socialist state in the world as an event of world-historic importance.

No other event in the history of mankind has had such tremendous influence over the entire course of social development, over the fate of all the peoples of the earth, as the victory of the great October Socialist Revolution. There has not been hitherto such a state as the U.S.S.R., which millions of people in all corners of the globe, regardless of nationality or race, love as their very own fatherland, and with which they feel themselves, their lives, their fate and their hopes vitally bound up.

As a result of the bourgeois revolutions, capitalism defeated the feudal system and won a dominating position. It encircled the entire world in its system of economy, overcame feudal particularism and established big national states. But capitalism merely replaced one form of exploitation by another, class antagonisms of one kind by another. It could not unite the peoples in peaceful fraternity. It deepened the gulf between them, creating new international contradictions and new causes of destructive wars of conquest.

As a result of the great October Socialist Revolution, socialism was victorious over capitalism on one-sixth of the globe. A powerful socialist state rose up in a tremendous territory covering half of Europe and Asia, in the heart of the world, a state based on the abolition of the exploitation of man by man and on a fraternal alliance among the peoples, and showing the way to the liberation of mankind from the bondage of capitalism, to

the unification of all the peoples of the earth in a supreme fraternity of free and happy working people.

In the course of twenty years of severe struggle, in the face of the furious resistance of the defeated exploited classes within the country and counter-revolutionary intervention from without, in conditions of encirclement by the hostile capitalist powers, the working people of the U.S.S.R., led by their glorious Party of Bolsheviks headed by the brilliant leaders of working mankind, Lenin and Stalin, transformed a backward, wretched country into a foremost, powerful socialist state.

Whereas in 1913 Lenin, in characterising the unbelievable backwardness of tsarist Russia, pointed out that as regards modern means of production the country's economy was *four times* behind England, *five times* behind Germany and *ten times* behind America; to-day the Soviet Union occupies *first place* in Europe and *second place* in the world as an industrial country as regards the output of industrial production. No one can now deny the enormous achievements of socialist construction, the tremendous growth of industry and the record harvests of collectivised agriculture. It is a fact, is it not, that such a stormy advance of economic development has taken place in the U.S.S.R. as has never been known by capitalist society? Whereas the development of industry of the capitalist countries during the period 1890—1913 showed an average growth in production of 5.8 per cent a year, and during the period 1913—1936 only 1.5 per cent, in the Soviet Union in 1936 alone the growth in industrial output totaled 28 per cent. Whereas in 1936 the industrial output of capitalist countries exceeded the 1913 level by *one-third*, in the Soviet Union it increased by more than *seven times*.

In the sphere of agriculture a great historical victory has been achieved. At the time when the agriculture of capitalist countries is not emerging from the protracted agrarian crisis as the result of which the sown area is decreasing, a great number of products being destroyed and the level of all production steadily lowering — in the Soviet Union, in place of a backward, scattered economy there has been created the most advanced and biggest socialist agriculture with 99 per cent of the area sown by the peasants collectivised. Thanks to the collective farm order, poverty in the village has been destroyed and there are no longer peasants who have no



land, no horses, no implements. More than 20,000,000 poor peasants who formerly lived a poverty-stricken existence have joined the collective farms and are to-day leading a well-to-do cultured life. Socialist agriculture is yielding record harvests unprecedented in the history of the country. In 1937 there was harvested nearly 7,000,000,000 poods of grain while the best years before the revolution gave four to five billion poods.

Under capitalism, wherever there is an increase of the wealth of the few, there is an increase, at the other pole, of poverty and misery for millions of working people; the boom periods are inevitably followed by severe crises which destroy the productive forces and bring in their train unemployment, hunger and poverty. The socialist system, on the other hand, does not know of crises, does not know of unemployment and poverty.

Irrefutable facts clearly testify to the superiority of the socialist system over the capitalist system, not only in the sphere of economics, but also in the sphere of everyday life and culture, science and art, in the sphere of the relations between the peoples. Only the bought apologists of capitalism can dispute this superiority. And only hopeless cretins who not infrequently call themselves socialists, and political charlatans who distort Marxism, venture still to prove that the working class is incapable of undertaking the historic responsibility of guiding the fate of its own people and of the organization of the national economy; that the proletariat, which is "inexperienced" in state and economic affairs, cannot get on without the bourgeoisie, who are "experienced" in these affairs.

Twenty years of the existence of the Soviet Union provide splendid confirmation of the words of Comrade Stalin uttered in 1927 on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution:

"The undoubted successes of socialism in the U.S.S.R. on the front of construction have clearly shown that the proletariat *can* successfully govern the country *without* the bourgeoisie and *against* the bourgeoisie, that it *can* successfully build up industry *without* the bourgeoisie and *against* the bourgeoisie, that it *can* successfully guide the whole of the national economy *without* the bourgeoisie and *against*

the bourgeoisie, that it *can* successfully build socialism despite the encirclement of the capitalist states."

Herein lies one of the most important lessons of principle of the great October Socialist Revolution for the working class of the capitalist countries, a lesson which needs to be particularly underlined on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary.

## 2

Much has been done by the proletariat of the capitalist countries in supporting the first proletarian revolution in the history of mankind. Had it not been for this support the Soviet workers and peasants would have shed their blood to a still greater degree and would have had to sacrifice still more in order to defend the gains of the socialist revolution. Nonetheless, however, it must be said outright that the working classes of the capitalist countries have not succeeded in thoroughly fulfilling either their duty toward the first socialist revolution, or toward their own liberation. Not only have they remained under the power of capital, and in Italy and Germany have fallen victims to the barbarous bondage of fascism, but they have involuntarily assisted in increasing the difficulties, privations, sufferings and sacrifices of the vanguard unit of the international proletariat.

But what would the world have looked like, if the proletariat of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy, after the October Socialist Revolution, in the period of 1918—1920, had not stopped half way in their revolutionary advance? What would the world have looked like had the German and Austrian revolutions of 1918 been carried through to the end, and had the dictatorship of the proletariat been established in the heart of Europe, in highly developed industrial countries, as a result of the victory of the revolution? A revolutionary bloc of the West-European proletariat and the working class of the Soviet Union would not only have facilitated a hundredfold the liquidation of the counter-revolutionary intervention and civil war, but would have immeasurably hastened on the building of socialism in the land of the Soviets. The fascist dictatorship would not have existed either in Italy, Germany, Austria or other countries. There



would have been no offensive of fascism upon the working class and the democratic peoples. There would not have been the present difficult trials of the Spanish and Chinese peoples. Mankind would not now be faced with the ominous menace of a new world slaughter.

At the time when the Russian workers and peasants overthrew the landlords and capitalists, all the necessary objective conditions were at hand in central Europe for the European and particularly the German proletariat taking the path of the Soviet workers and peasants. But this did not take place. It did not take place mainly because the decisive word at that time in the leadership of the mass organisations of the proletariat belonged to the leaders of the Social-Democratic Parties, who had been in coalition with their own imperialist bourgeoisie from the outbreak of the war.

In their effort at all costs to preserve the shattered foundations of bourgeois society, they widely utilized the influence of the ideology and policy of *Social-Democratism, reformism*, in order to deceive the majority of the working class, by spreading the conviction among them that the workers would be led to socialism not by the further development of the revolution but by its rapid liquidation. By their *coalition with the bourgeoisie* they *split* the working class movement, weakened the proletariat, isolated it from the peasantry and the small townspeople, and thus helped the bourgeoisie to gather their forces and to undertake the offensive against the revolutionary workers and peasants. The political cowards and deceivers of the proletariat who were at the head of the mass organisations of the working class alarmed the workers with the prospect of sacrifices, privation and economic ruin. They assured them that they would be led to socialism not by the path of *Bolshevism*, by the revolutionary practical application of the teachings of Marx and Engels, not by the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, but that a peaceful and painless transition to socialism would be ensured by the path of *Social-Democratism* — the path of coalition with the bourgeoisie and the preservation of the bourgeois system.

Now the results of the twenty years are before us. Who will deny that the sacrifices and privations borne, for instance, by the working-class and working masses of Germany throughout the whole of the post-war period

and, particularly, in the conditions of the savage regime of the fascist dictatorship, are a thousand times greater than all the possible sacrifices and privations that would have been demanded by the victory of the proletarian revolution in 1918?

Instead of the promised peaceful, painless transition to socialism, Social-Democratism, by its entire capitulatory and splitting policy, cleared the way for the victory of fascism.

*Had it not been for the Social-Democratism of Turatti and Daragona in Italy the victory of the fascism of Mussolini would not have been possible. Had it not been for the Social-Democratism of Ebert and Noske in Germany the victory of the fascism of Hitler would not have been possible. Had it not been for the Social-Democratism of Renner and Bauer in Austria the victory of the fascism of Schuschnigg would not have been possible.* Nothing can now conceal this truth, which is also irrefutably confirmed by numerous now well known documents from the post-war political history of Europe.

In the conditions of the unparalleled revolutionary crisis at the end of the imperialist war, the reactionary Social-Democratic leaders split the working class, disarmed it ideologically and politically, hindered the development of the proletarian revolutions that had matured, saved the domination of capitalism and thereby made the working people a target for fascism. At the same time *Bolshevism*, true Marxism, united the working class, created an inviolable alliance of the workers and peasants, destroyed capitalism, ensured the victory of the socialist revolution, and led to the building of socialist society on one-sixth of the globe.

And Comrade Stalin was a thousand times right when he wrote ten years ago that: "*It is impossible to put an end to capitalism without having put an end to Social-Democratism in the working class movement.*"

Herein lies the second most important lesson of principle for the proletariat of the capitalist countries in connection with the twentieth anniversary of the great October Socialist Revolution.

### 3

During twenty years, working masses in the capitalist countries, especially during the world economic crisis, have experienced much, suffered much and learned much on the basis of their own bitter experience. The



final and irrevocable victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. on the one hand, and the lessons of the temporary defeats inflicted on the working class by fascism, especially in Germany, on the other hand, *have undermined* the former influence of Social-Democratism not only in the working class, but also in the ranks of the Socialist Parties themselves and the trade unions under their political leadership. In the Social-Democratic camp there has begun a process of departure from the positions of *reformism*, of departure from the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and of the transition to the position of struggle jointly with the Communist Party against fascism, to the position of united action of the working class and of the anti-fascist People's Front. This process has already found clear expression in the establishment of the united front between the Communists and Socialists in France, Spain and Italy, and partly in a number of other countries.

The further development of this process is being facilitated and speeded up by the entire course of the events of recent years, which imperatively faces the working class with the *most important shock task* of at all costs barring the road to fascism in the bourgeois-democratic countries, of overthrowing fascism in the countries where it is in power, and of defending world peace against the fascist warmakers. This process of the departure from Social-Democratism is being speeded up by the correct application by the Communist Parties of the main lines laid down by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International.

As a result of the influence of the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R., as the result of the development of the People's Front movement, of the growing influence of Communism in the ranks of the working class movement, there will, without doubt, be an increase in the number of Socialist Parties and organisations which *give up bankrupt Social-Democratism, which wage a struggle together with the Communist Parties against the common class enemy and which stand for unity with the Communists in a single mass party of the proletariat.*

Such a unification has already taken place between the Socialists and Communists of Catalonia. It is being prepared jointly by the Communist and Socialist Parties of Spain. The necessary preconditions for it are also maturing in France as a result of the joint struggle of the Communists

and Socialists in the united Confederation of Labour, and in the ranks of the anti-fascist People's Front, and also thanks to the beneficent influence exerted by the establishment of a united Confederation of Labour over the whole process of the consolidation of the forces of the French proletariat. The new pact between the Italian Communists and Socialists is still further strengthening their fraternal relations and the bonds of their joint struggle against the fascist dictatorship of Mussolini. Mutual understanding and accord are increasing between the Communists and Socialists in Germany in the struggle against the fascist dictatorship of Hitler, despite all the machinations and intrigues of the diehard leaders of the foreign executive of the Social-Democratic Party.

It may be said with confidence that by the twentieth anniversary of the great October Socialist Revolution, the working class of the capitalist countries is *closely approaching the liquidation of the split* in the world working class movement which was brought into being by Social-Democratism. There are still many difficulties and obstacles of an ideological, political and organisational character in the way of liquidating this split. There are difficulties connected with the very history and traditions of the working class movement in the different countries, difficulties which are not so easy to overcome. But the main thing is that the ruling classes of the capitalist countries, which are profoundly interested in the division of the forces of the working class movement, are doing and will continue to do everything possible to prevent the unity of the working class movement being established. For their benefit, the reactionary leaders of the Socialist International are expending furious energy in order to turn back the wheel of history. Even in the face of the monstrous Germano-Italian intervention in Spain, the ferocious onslaught by the Japanese fascist militarists on China and the exceptionally acute menace of a new world imperialist war, these leaders are doing everything possible to wreck every attempt at joint action by the international organisations of the workers in defence of the Spanish and Chinese people, in defence of peace.

But there are no such difficulties and obstacles on the path to unity in the struggle against fascism and war as the working classes cannot overcome, if they are filled with the firm determination to unite their forces and fulfil their historic mission.



The existence of the land of socialism, that powerful buttress of the struggle of the international proletariat, the buttress of peace, liberty and progress, is a *tremendous factor in the liquidation of the split in the ranks of the world working class movement*. By their example, their labour heroism, their Stakhanov movement, their devotion to their socialist fatherland, their merciless struggle against the enemies of the people, Trotsky-Bukharinite spies, diversionists and agents of fascism, the working people of the Soviet Union exert enormous influence on the bringing together of the split forces of the world working class movement. The sympathy and love of the working people of the capitalist world for the Soviet Union, the land of victorious socialism, are steadily on the increase. And this fact acts as a most powerful antidote against the splitting work carried on in the ranks of the working class by the open and masked agents of the class enemy.

The land of victorious socialism, which is playing such an outstanding part in uniting the international proletariat, is rallying all sincere supporters of the workers' cause still more closely around the U.S.S.R. In the present international situation there is not, nor can there be any other, *more certain criterion*, than one's *attitude* toward the Soviet Union, in determining who is the *friend* and who the *enemy* of the cause of the working class and socialism, of determining who is a *supporter* and who an *opponent* of democracy and peace. The *touchstone* in checking the sincerity and honesty of every individual active in the working class movement, of every working class party and organisation of the working people, and of every democrat in the capitalist countries, is their *attitude* toward the great land of socialism. You cannot carry on a real struggle against fascism if you do not render all possible assistance in strengthening the *most important buttress* of this struggle, the Soviet Union. You cannot carry on a serious struggle against the fascist instigators of a new world bloodbath, if you do not render undivided support to the U.S.S.R., a *most important factor* in the maintenance of international peace. You cannot carry on a real struggle for socialism in your own country, if you do not oppose the enemies of the Soviet State, where this socialism is being fulfilled by the heroic efforts of the working people. You cannot be a *real friend* of the U.S.S.R., if you do not condemn its enemies — the Trotsky-Bukharinite agents of fascism.

The *historical dividing line* between the forces of fascism, war and capitalism, on the one hand, and the forces of peace, democracy and socialism on the other hand, is in fact becoming the *attitude* toward the Soviet Union, and not the formal attitude toward Soviet power and socialism in general, but the *attitude* to the Soviet Union, which has been carrying on a real existence for twenty years already, with its untiring struggle against enemies, with its dictatorship of the working class and the Stalin Constitution, with the leading role of the Party of Lenin and Stalin.

Herein lies the third most important lesson of principle for the proletariat of the capitalist countries in connection with the twentieth anniversary of the great October Socialist Revolution.

*November, 1937.*



## IV PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY.

### REPORT TO THE FIFTH CONGRESS OF THE BULGARIAN COMMUNIST PARTY.

The Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists) which, I have no doubt, the Congress will unanimously agree to rename the Bulgarian Communist Party, has its roots deep in the past. It was founded as a social-democrat party in 1891 at the Congress on Buzludja. However, it was only in 1903, following the rift with the "broad" socialists, that it became a Marxist and working class party.

During its development our Party waged a ceaseless struggle against alien petty-bourgeois and bourgeois influences and championed the formation of an independent working class with an ideology and organisation of its own. About the turn of the century it was a small but growing detachment, trying to imbue the workers with class consciousness, to organise them and defend their vital interests, i.e. it was primarily a propaganda organisation out to popularise socialism. From this modest status it gradually developed during and after World War I into a mass political party of the working class.

Under the impact of the Russian Revolution, which was enthusiastically welcomed by the Bulgarian working people, the Party proclaimed itself in 1919 the Bulgarian Communist Party and, following the lead of the Bolshevik Party, took part in the foundation of the Communist International. It remained an active member of the Communist International until the latter's self-disbandment in 1943.

In the course of three decades, especially after the September Uprising in 1923, our Party rid itself of its non-Bolshevik, orthodox "narrow" socialist vestiges, fought against various right and left-wing deviations, learned from the Bolshevik Party, accumulated an ever-increasing store of experience, developed, transformed and rearmed itself ideologically in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism. It became a genuine Marxist-Leninist party, the organised and conscious vanguard of the working class, a party

of a new type, capable of mobilising and leading the working class in a life and death struggle, of forging a militant alliance between the working class and the other working people from town and countryside, of overthrowing the brutal fascist dictatorship, of taking into its own hands the destiny of our country, firmly resolved to lead it on to the victory of socialism, to the full triumph of communism.

In its development the Party had to traverse a difficult, stony and zigzag road, a road of heroism and unshakable faith in the working class and the toilers. Passing through a long period of underground activity, suffering severe setbacks and making great sacrifices, our Party never flagged nor gave up the fight.

The Party has always been loyal to the liberating mission of the working class. Throughout its existence, despite errors, weaknesses and vacillations, it always strove to be in the midst of the masses, to move forward with them, to instruct them in the spirit of uncompromising class struggle and proletarian internationalism, to defend their interests honestly and selflessly and to lead them into battle against their sworn enemies. During the hardest years of monarcho-fascist dictatorship and German occupation, the Party fearlessly headed the fight against fascism and foreign invaders, organised and directed the partisan movement, created the Fatherland Front and, by its selfless and correct guidance, succeeded in leading the nation on to the victory of September 9 and in winning the sympathy and the confidence of the broad masses.

The recent fusion of the Social-Democratic Party, participating in the Fatherland Front, with our Party, on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and our Party rules and discipline, did away with the last elements of disunity within the working class, which is now united in a single political party.

It is only natural and logical that our Party should be recognised today as the leading force in the state administration and in the entire public life of our country.

Our Party's great prestige, the general interest which our congress has aroused and the hopes our people are pinning on its decisions, show clearly that it is entrusted with the historical mission of ensuring our country's progress by laying the cornerstone of socialist society, a society without exploitation of man by man.



There cannot be the slightest doubt that the Party of the Bulgarian Communists, heading the working class, enjoying the confidence and the support of the working people and remaining always loyal to the all-conquering doctrine of Marxism-Leninism, will successfully fulfil its historic mission. The decisions of our present congress will be an additional guarantee of this.

## I. MAIN PERIODS OF THE PARTY'S DEVELOPMENT

Before analysing the present state of our Party and its immediate tasks, it is advisable to make a general critical survey of its development from its foundation up to the present. This has both a historic and political significance for the party as well as for our people and country. It is necessary fully to clarify certain questions of its past history.

The history of our Party can be divided into the following main periods:

- 1) From the foundation of the Party in 1891, to the split with the opportunist socialists in 1903.
- 2) From the formation of the Party as a Marxist party of the working class in 1903, to the Russian Revolution and the transformation of the Party into a Communist Party in 1919, and its participation in the foundation of the Communist International.
- 3) From 1919, to the September Uprising of 1923.
- 4) From the September Uprising of 1923, to World War II in 1940.
- 5) From World War II to the uprising of September 9, 1944.
- 6) From September 9, to the present day.

These main periods in the Party's history have, naturally, their own stages of development.

Let us analyse the most characteristic features of these periods in the development of our Party.

### 1. *The "Narrow" Socialist Period.*

Before proceeding to analyse the "narrow" socialist period I want to observe that the first period of our Party, from 1891 to 1903, was char-

acterised by a growing and stubborn propaganda of socialist ideas and by a ceaseless struggle against bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideologists who denied the possibility of a socialist movement under the then still undeveloped social conditions. It had to be proved that in Bulgaria, which had barely entered upon the path of capitalism, there existed the possibility for socialism, the exponent of which would be the incipient working class, that the future belonged to this class, and that it had to have its own political party. A growing struggle ensued within the Party around these issues between the revolutionary Marxist trend of Dimitar Blagoev and the reformist-opportunist trend of Yanko Sakazov. This ideological fight ended in the victory of revolutionary Marxism over petty-bourgeois reformist socialism.

The Party's positive attributes during its "narrow" socialist period were a deep loyalty to Marxism, proletarian socialism and internationalism, an uncompromising class attitude toward the bourgeoisie and its reformist agents, an unshakable faith in the triumph and the future of the working class, and a conscious iron discipline. The "narrow" socialists firmly believed in subordination of the personal life, private interests and individual will of the party member to the interests and the will of the proletarian party. Thanks to these qualities our Party achieved great success in the period prior to World War I and immediately following it. They enabled it to become the organiser and leader of the workers' struggles and to dislodge reformism from its key positions in the labour movement. They also helped it during World War I to adopt a bold internationalist stand, to draw nearer to the Bolsheviks and, after the Russian revolution and the creation of the Communist International, to proceed with its own bolshevization.

During the "narrow" socialist period our Party cleansed its ranks of the reformists, ensured the independent development of the working class as a separate class, and waged an implacable struggle against the ruling bourgeoisie. Class against class was the Party's slogan and policy during that period. It took over leadership of the growing struggles of the workers and toilers for an eight-hour working day, social legislation, improvement of living and working conditions, and against the reactionary home and foreign policy of the bourgeoisie. It organised and led the trade



union movement. It directed the great miners' strike at Pernik in 1906, as well as the strikes of other sections of the working class during the ensuing years. There was not a single strike which was not under the Party's leadership or at least under its influence.

The Party educated the working people in the spirit of proletarian internationalism. It seized the initiative and took a very active part in the creation of a Balkan federation of socialist parties, and strove with all its might to strengthen the solidarity between the Bulgarian working people and the working people of other Balkan states and all over the world.

The "narrow" socialists' inflexible attitude towards reformism and the various reformist factions, their refusal to live side by side with bourgeois agents in the labour movement, their militant struggle in defence of the vital interests and rights of the working class—all this stamped them as a peculiarly revolutionary Marxist trend in the international labour movement and in the Second International. Of all the left social-democratic trends, they were the closest to Bolshevism.

From this it did not follow, however, that "narrow" socialism did not differ from Bolshevism on basic questions. The Party suffered from the dangerous misconception that "narrow" socialism was a Bulgarian brand of Bolshevism and that it only had to adapt itself to the new international situation.

It should be stressed that it was this very misconception of the Party and especially of its leadership, from Dimiter Blagoev down, which long held it back in the position of 19th century Marxism and prevented it from assimilating the new in Marxism, the valuable contributions of Lenin, who brought Marxism up-to-date by adapting it to the epoch of imperialism—the highest stage of capitalism. This substantially retarded the bolshevization of our Party, and explains the wrong tactics of its leadership during the Vladaya events, and especially during the military-fascist coup d'état on June 9, 1923.

It is true that "narrow" socialism, especially with its uncompromising class attitude, its struggle against Bulgarian Menshevism and its iron discipline, was close to Bolshevism. It is no less true, however, that "narrow" socialism differed from Bolshevism and Leninism on several basic questions of principles and tactics.

What were the main differences between "narrow" socialism and Bolshevism?

"Narrow" socialism did not consider the proletarian dictatorship a basic feature of the proletarian revolution. This question was missing in the party programme. Unaware as yet of the emergence of a new phase of capitalist development, the last phase, the eve of the proletarian revolution, it did not put forward concretely the question of power and armed insurrection as a means of overthrowing the bourgeoisie.

"Narrow" socialism did not hold Leninist positions on the question of the role of the Party as the militant vanguard of the working class in the revolution, in the struggle for power, although in its structure, organisation and discipline, the Party came close to the Leninist doctrine of the party. Our Party did not yet consider itself a higher form of organisation of the Bulgarian working class which could lead all other organisations of the working people, establish the closest contact with the masses and thus ensure successful revolutionary activity.

"Narrow" socialism was not quite free from a certain worship of spontaneity in the labour movement. It was under the spell of the social-democratic conception of the automatic functioning of objective social laws. It saw as its main task agitation and propaganda, explaining and elucidating the objectively functioning laws of social development, organising and educating the workers and all working people in the spirit of socialism, arousing the class consciousness of the workers, guiding their daily struggles with a view to the inevitable socialist revolution which would occur as a result of the ripening objective conditions. The Party did not consider itself an active force, called upon not only to organise and educate the toilers and to direct their everyday struggles, not only to explain events, but also to participate in the creation and canalisation of the revolutionary events, to become a dominant factor in the preparation, organisation and development of the proletarian revolution. Hence, a certain lag and passivity of the Party at the moment of sharp class struggles, a sectarian isolation from the masses who had risen in revolt.

"Narrow" socialism transformed a series of Marxist teachings into dogmas, as a result of which the Party lapsed into sectarianism and made its contacts with the broad masses more difficult. Thus, for instance, pursuing



a policy of uncompromising struggle against the bourgeoisie as a class, correctly opposing the various electoral coalitions with bourgeois parties and the "constructive" legislative work of the bourgeois parliament, the Party turned independent action into a dogma, denied in general and under any conditions the advisability of an understanding with other social and political groups and thus in fact isolated itself. Our Party's attitude had nothing in common with the Leninist doctrine of revolutionary compromises, without which no revolutionary party can wage a successful struggle and make headway.

Failing to understand the role of the peasants as allies of the working class in the struggle against capitalism, it took up a Plekhanovist and not a Leninist position on the peasant problem. It enlisted peasants under its banner only in so far as they moved over to the positions of the proletariat. As is well known, Lenin supplemented and further developed the Marxist doctrine of the relations of the proletariat and the peasants. He put forward and developed the idea of a militant alliance between the workers and the peasants in their capacity of small commodity producers, before they are ready to assimilate socialism. Lenin showed the possibility of using the existing revolutionary potentialities of the peasants in the bourgeois-democratic as well as in the socialist revolution.

Our Party waged a correct and successful struggle against the reformists who tried to transform the party of the working class into a diluted petty-bourgeois party and in this way to make it a tool of the bourgeoisie and deprive the working class of its independence. But our Party failed to grasp that the peasants, as small commodity producers, subjected to the exploitation of monopoly capital, have considerable revolutionary potentialities, that they are the natural allies of the working class in its struggle for emancipation, that without the alliance of the workers and peasants, without the realisation of the leadership of the working class in this alliance, capitalist rule cannot be overthrown and no victory of the proletariat is possible.

"Narrow" socialism dogmatically defined the peasant commodity producer solely as a conservative element in society. It did not realise that the domination of the trusts leads to the increasing exploitation and pauperisation of the mass of the peasantry, renders them ever more dissatisfied and

arouses revolutionary tendencies among them. This lack of understanding of the revolutionary potentialities of the peasantry as an ally of the working class in the revolution constitutes one of the most characteristic differences between "narrow" socialism and Leninism. Hence it was by no means an accident that the Party in 1900, during the peasant revolts, neglected the revolutionary potentialities of the peasants in the struggle against capitalism, potentialities which could have been developed and realised only under the leadership of the working class and its militant vanguard. It is noteworthy that on not a single one of the problems which Lenin developed and contributed to the treasury of Marxism, such as the continuation and application of Marxism in the epoch of imperialism, did "narrow" socialism take up a Leninist position. Hence it failed to profit from the lessons of the first Russian revolution in 1905, and both in its appraisal of that revolution and in its deductions from it, failed to go beyond Kautsky. It was completely alien to the new essential aspects of the Marxist theory of the proletarian revolution, developed by Lenin in his "Two Tactics," concerning the leading role of the working class in the bourgeois democratic revolution, the latter's transformation into a socialist revolution and the armed uprising. That is why, although it tirelessly propagated the idea of a socialist revolution as the only way out for the toilers, our party had no clear conception of the basic problems of this revolution. It did not think out the problem of the specific ways and means by which the revolution could be carried out in Bulgaria, of its main driving forces, its character and peculiarities and the role of the working class and the Party. It did not tackle the problem of the allies of the working class.

This shows that our Party, despite its enormous revolutionary services to the Bulgarian working people, was not yet a Bolshevik Marxist-Leninist party, a party of the new type—"sufficiently experienced to find its bearings amidst the complex conditions of a revolutionary situation and sufficiently flexible to steer clear of all submerged rocks in the path to its goal", as Comrade Stalin said.

Prior to World War I, when the primary task was to organise the forces of the working class, and develop their class-consciousness the shortcomings and weaknesses of "narrow" socialism were not yet felt in prac-

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tice. But, when World War I broke out and the overthrow of capitalism became a practical problem, they stood out glaringly and were intensely felt.

During World War I, especially after the Russian Revolution, the party launched an educational and agitational drive among the soldiers to prepare them "to follow the example of their Russian brothers," i.e. for revolution. But at the decisive moment when the soldiers at the front turned their bayonets against the war-criminals, rose en masse and set off for Sofia, (i.e. followed in practice the example of their Russian brothers), the Party was not up to its task. It failed to organise and successfully direct the uprising, to give it a nation-wide character by drawing in the workers and peasants, to give it direction and to transform it into a people's uprising against the monarchy (the main agency of German imperialism) and against the ruling capitalist clique which was using the war for plunder and enrichment. The Party could undoubtedly at that time have united the majority of the toilers from towns and villages by raising the slogan of peace and a people's democratic republic. Unity of action between the workers' party and the Agrarian Union would have ensured the success of the uprising. Such a victorious popular uprising for a people's republic might in 1918 have changed the general trend of development of the country and the Balkans to the advantage of the people.

The main reason why our Party did not take over leadership of the soldier masses who in the autumn of 1918 had risen against the war and the monarchy, lay in its doctrinaire tendencies, its non-Bolshevik concepts and methods, vestiges of "narrow" socialism.

Lacking the Leninist conception of the peculiar features of the revolutionary process in different countries, of the relationship and organic tie-up between the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism, our Party considered that the epoch of socialist revolution had arrived and hence that the slogan of a people's republic could not be put forward by a Marxist party, since it was not a specifically socialist slogan.

Lacking the Leninist conception of the militant alliance of the workers and peasants, our Party thought that because the soldier masses, composed predominantly of peasants, were not ready to fight for Soviet power they were therefore incapable of any real revolutionary struggle. Just because of this doctrinaire interpretation of Marxism, it did not take over

leadership of the soldiers' uprising and did nothing to transform it into general uprising. As a result, the rising remained isolated, without proper leadership, and was quelled.

Thus, "narrow" socialism was a revolutionary Marxist trend, but not a Bulgarian brand of Bolshevism. A long struggle was necessary to bolshevize the Party in order to make it a party of a new type, a Marxist Leninist party, such as with a justified feeling of pride it appears today before the congress.

## *2 Our Party in the Communist International and the Beginning of its Bolshevisation.*

Our Party unanimously and enthusiastically welcomed the Russian Revolution, adopting its slogans and mobilising our working people in defence of the young Soviet Socialist Republic.

During the civil war, imperialist intervention and famine in the Volga regions, our Party carried through a remarkable political and relief campaign. Who can forget the historic months when our working peasants with rare enthusiasm and self-sacrifice collected a great deal of food for their Soviet brothers and when the working class, headed by the Party, dispersed the 20,000 strong Wrangel Army in Bulgaria and prevented its use by Churchill and his friends in a military intervention against the Soviet Union?

At its 1919 congress our Party renamed itself the Communist Party. In contrast to the parties in many other countries, our Party as a whole entered into the Communist International: what is more it played a part in its creation, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and the immortal Lenin. It adopted a new programme. It regarded the proletarian revolution no longer as a long-term aim but as an immediate task, for which the objective conditions had already matured and the solution of which depended on the subjective factor of the revolution, i.e. mainly on the readiness and ability of our party to organize and lead the revolution. At its 1921 congress it declared that the Soviet form of the dictatorship of the proletariat was a basic factor of the proletarian revolution. In its resolution on the peasant problem the Party proclaimed as an indispensable prerequisite for the victory of the revolution the alliance between workers and peasants under the leadership of the working class. The



adoption of these programmatic points, which were popularised through translations of Lenin's basic works, was accompanied by the Party's active participation in the work of the Communist International.

The Party also adopted in principle the methods of illegal struggle and their combination with the fullest use of all legal possibilities for the struggle, such as parliament and municipal and county councils.

The Party proceeded to create a military organisation of its own, engaged in considerable propaganda and organisational activity among the soldiers and began to arm the masses. It headed the bitter struggles of the working people after the catastrophic war, the great campaigns for an amnesty, against the high cost of living, against the turning of Bulgaria into a base for intervention against the U.S.S.R., and for recognition of the Soviet Union.

At the same time the Party launched a mass struggle for transforming the municipalities from instruments of oppression, spoliation and exploitation into organisations serving the interest of the working people. A series of important town and several village councils passed into the hands of the Communist Party. Thus, in 1920 we had 22 town and 65 village Communist municipalities. Their economic and cultural policy in the interests of the working class and the working people generally naturally met with the fierce resistance of the bourgeoisie and of the central authorities. The long and very bitter struggles for the formation and consolidation of these communes, as they were called, will always be remembered in the history of our country.

Unless the proletariat, led by the Party, could take over power completely in all spheres, these communes were bound to be short-lived; they were destroyed by the bourgeoisie one by one.

But the struggle of the working people under the leadership of our Party to capture the municipalities, contributed much to the unification of the masses in the struggle against the exploiters and raised the Party's prestige considerably.

Our Party linked up the working people's struggles for their immediate needs with the preparation of the decisive battles for the victory of the revolution. When important interests of the working people were at stake or their political rights and liberties in serious jeopardy, the Party

did not hesitate to resort also to the organisation of a general political strike, as was the case with the transport strike in 1919-20, and to major mass actions, going so far as to collaborate with the Agrarian Government in 1922 against rising reaction and fascism. Thus the Party rallied new large masses from towns and villages.

Despite its participation in the Communist International and its considerable successes in emerging as the leader of the class struggle of the working people in the revolutionary post-war situation, the Party had not yet grasped, and its leadership had not pointed out concretely, the basic difference between "narrow" socialism and Bolshevism, had not yet drawn from it the necessary lessons for the Party, and had not yet headed the struggle for overcoming the negative hangovers of "narrow" socialism and to rearm the Party with Marxism-Leninism.

The Party was, indeed, accumulating its own revolutionary capital, but there continued to predominate in it legalist, propagandist habits and a tendency to consider Marxism rather as a dogma than as a guide to revolutionary action.

This became very apparent in the position taken by the Party leadership on June 9, 1923, when just this "narrow" socialist doctrinaire tendency gained the upper hand. The ill-fated policy of neutrality, proclaimed by the Party leadership, was justified by lifeless doctrinaire considerations completely alien to reality and to revolutionary Marxism. The Party leadership maintained that because the Agrarian Government had discredited itself by its administration the masses would not rise in its defence against the fascist coup; and on the other hand, that since the peasants were not yet ready to fight for a workers' and peasants' government, they would not follow the appeal of the Communist Party for an uprising against fascism. The Party leadership evidently underestimated the great authority of the Communist Party among the masses, which it had won by its struggles. It underestimated the people's hatred of fascism and of the banker-militarist oligarchy, provoked by the representatives of the Palace and the bourgeois-monarchist cliques and fanned by the Communist Party. If it had followed the example set by the Bolshevik Party during the attempted Kornilov coup in September 1917, if it had united with the sound forces in the Agrarian Union and had come out openly against



the fascist plotters, the fascist coup would undoubtedly have been smashed.

The non-Bolshevik, "narrow" socialist concept of the revolution prevailing within the Party leadership on June 9 and the days following led to a moral and political fiasco. An excellent opportunity was missed to destroy completely the monarcho-fascist forces at their very outset and to win important positions in the struggle against capitalism and for socialism.

"Narrow" socialism as an ideological and political weapon of the working class did not pass the test of history under the new conditions of the post-war crisis of capitalism and the ensuing struggle for power. This weapon proved to be clearly inadequate to ensure a proletarian victory in our country.

Our Party had to grasp this, to see in the light of its own revolutionary experience the difference between "narrow" socialism and Bolshevism, and to overhaul its entire political and organisational activity in a Marxist-Leninist spirit, overcoming once and for all its hangovers of negative social-democrat concepts, habits and methods. The sound Marxist "narrow" socialist traditions, qualities and experience had to be melted down in the Bolshevik cauldron.

Our Party had already started moving along that road, but its purification from the negative vestiges of the past and its bolshevization had now to take place under the hard conditions of illegality and white terror which followed in the wake of the suppression of the September uprising, under the relentless and brutal fire of the enemy.

### 3. *The September 1923 Uprising, Turning Point in the Bolshevisation of the Party.*

The anti-fascist popular uprising in September 1923, organized and led by the Bulgarian Communist Party, constitutes a turning-point in its development from "narrow" socialism to Bolshevism.

That which the Communist Party failed to achieve during the crisis caused by the fascist coup, it attempted to do later when the fascist government threw the country into a new crisis which led to the September armed uprising. The sound Marxist nucleus in August 1923, aided by the Communist International, gained ascendancy within the party leadership and imposed a radical change in its strategy and tactics. The

Party broke with its former isolation, embarked upon a course of rallying all the anti-fascist forces in one block of the working people of town and countryside and proceeded to prepare the masses for a general struggle against the monarcho-fascist dictatorship, including an armed uprising, raising the slogan of a workers' and peasants' government.

Steering this new course, the Party concluded an alliance for common struggle with the Agrarian Union, tried to achieve an agreement with the Macedonian organisation I.M.R.Q., and extended a hand for joint struggle to the Social-Democratic Party whose leaders had hitched it to the chariot of Tsankov. In co-operation with the Agrarian Union it took over leadership of the September popular armed uprising.

The conditions under which this uprising took place were, naturally, no longer as favourable as in June. The initiative had passed into the hands of the enemy. But even in September the victory of the uprising was objectively possible. Everything depended on the energy, boldness and unity of the Communist Party and of the masses in revolt. The failure of the Party rank and file and leadership fully to realise the erroneousness and harmfulness of the June 9 tactics and the Party's incomplete bolshevisation, as I have already stressed, prevented it from properly organising, leading and ensuring the success of the September 1923 uprising.

The September events demonstrated that many local and central Party leaders had either not adopted the course of uncompromising struggle against fascism, or had done so only in words, without conviction or the will to fight, without a desire really to prepare the Party for such a struggle. As a result, many Party organisations were caught napping by these events. During the uprising many local leaders could not or would not undertake any action against the fascist authorities. Herein lies the main reason for its defeat.

There are, however, defeats which contribute much to the future victory of the cause of working class emancipation. Such was the case with the defeat of the September 1923 uprising.

The fact that the Party took over leadership of the uprising, put an end to the defeatism of June 9 and adopted a firm course of struggle against the fascist dictatorship, was of decisive importance for its own future and for that of the Bulgarian revolutionary movement.



The September uprising created a bloody and unbridgeable gap between masses of the people and the fascist bourgeoisie. As a result, fascism never managed during the succeeding years to stabilise its positions and to form a broad social basis. The Party's selfless struggle and consistent and tireless work for the establishment of a united anti-fascist front brought it much closer to the masses, strengthened its ties with them and created the pre-requisites for its emergence as the true leader of the working people of town and countryside in the struggle for democracy and socialism.

These were great achievements which were firmly embedded in the revolutionary arsenal of our Party.

The bloody lesson of the September uprising galvanised the bolshevization process of the Party. It was considerably helped also by the open admission of the June 9 error by the leader of the party, Dimitar Blagoev, and by his complete approval of the September uprising.

At the same time, however, the defeat and the great casualties suffered by the Party and the masses kept alive liquidationist right and left-wing tendencies within the Party. Both trends condemned the September uprising and united in an unprincipled bloc for a struggle against the September leadership of the Party. The final goal of this bloc was to liquidate in practice the Communist Party.

A group of former communist activists, headed by Nikola Sakarov and Ivan Klincharov, proclaimed the Party "liquidated" and founded an opportunist miscarriage—"the Independent Labour Party." The workers met this treacherous "party" with animosity, while the Central Committee excluded the liquidators from the Party. This showed the danger which threatened the party after the defeat of the September uprising and against which a decisive struggle had to be waged.

An important moment in the Party's development after the September setback and after its ban by the fascist government was the illegal Vitosha Conference which took place in April, 1924, with the participation of delegates from most districts.

The Vitosha Conference expressed its solidarity with the appraisal by the Executive Committee of the Communist International of the events and of the tactics of our Party during the period under review.

It admitted that during the June 9 days the party had permitted serious errors in the application of the tactics of the united front and that on June 9 it had committed a crucial blunder.

The conference endorsed the orientation of the Party toward an armed uprising adopted at the beginning of August, but condemned both the pre- and post-September "June 9 tactics" stubbornly maintained by the majority of the Central Committee and of the Party Council. The justification of this erroneous position on the part of the Central Committee hindered to no small extent the conscious orientation of the Party toward an armed uprising.

The conference considered it correct that the Party "had assumed command of the uprising," started by the popular masses, and "had fixed its aim—a workers' and peasants' government"—and under "exceedingly difficult conditions" had attempted "to organise, unify and broaden it." The Party had thereby shown that it was "capable of passing over from revolutionary propaganda and agitation to revolutionary action," that it was "a genuine Communist Party" which had fulfilled its assigned task in a worthy manner: to prepare and lead the toilers toward a new armed uprising for the establishment of a workers' and peasants' government.

The significance of the Vitosha Conference consists in the fact that, at a most crucial moment in the life of the Party, it succeeded in rallying the sound Party forces around the September nucleus of the Central Committee and based them on the September line of the Party, approved and ratified by the Communist International. But while mobilising the masses for the correct Party policy, combating the right deviation, it failed to give adequate warning of the danger of the left, against which a decisive fight had also to be waged.

The situation during the period following the September uprising and the outlawing of the Communist Party and of the working class organisations, was characterized by the following facts:

- 1) The country was facing the perspective of new struggles for the overthrow of the fascist government and the creation of a workers' and peasants' government. The results of the parliamentary elections in November 1923 confirmed this estimate of the Party leadership, which



coincided with that of the Communist International. They showed that the opposition against the fascist government, represented by the Communist Party and the Agrarian Union, was quite strong. The conclusion was that the indignation of the masses was great and that they were disposed to continue the fight for the overthrow of the fascist government.

2) The fact that Communists and Agrarians went into the election campaign with a common list showed that they had learned a lesson from the past and had adopted the new tactics of the united front. The joint struggle of the Communist Party and the Agrarian Union was of decisive importance for the victory in those elections.

3) The fascist dictatorship seriously impeded the legal mass work of the Party. At the same time, the perspectives of a new armed struggle induced the Party to pay special attention to the military training of the masses.

In this situation and stimulated by the white terror of the fascist government, there arose the danger of an ultra-left deviation within the Party, and particularly within its military organisation which, in answer to the government terror, organised its own groupings and committed terrorist acts.

Meanwhile, the end of 1924 and the beginning of 1925 marked a change in the general situation. The international and domestic position of fascism was temporarily strengthened as a result of the temporary and partial stabilisation of capitalism in Europe. There existed no prospect for a new armed uprising. In March 1925, the Party representatives abroad re-evaluated the country's position nationally and internationally and proposed to suspend the Party line of armed insurrection. Instead, they recommended a course of creating mass organisations and of intensifying the mass struggle of the workers and peasants for the satisfaction of their vital needs. This new policy was intended to forestall the imminent danger of an ultra-left deviation, which would have been fatal to the Party and to the revolutionary movement. The Party Executive inside the country, however, proved unable to cope with the ultra-left deviation, to discontinue in time the policy of armed uprising and to proceed with the reorganisation of the Party's activity in accordance with the changed conditions.

The fascist government continued its terroristic course with even greater ferocity. Taking advantage of the desperate actions of the leaders of the Party's military organisation, culminating in the attempt at the Sofia cathedral, it started a mass slaughter of active Communists and worker and peasant activists.

The terror following the attempt at Sofia Cathedral on April 16, 1925 dealt a very serious blow to the Party. Its leadership was disorganised. The majority of the Party cadres who had survived the September uprising were killed, imprisoned or compelled to emigrate. Conditions of underground work became exceptionally hard. It was under such conditions that the Party had to ensure a leadership to the struggle of the toilers and to continue the fight against fascism. It had also to learn its lessons from the defeats of 1923 and 1925, to discover their main causes and to unify the party members on a Bolshevik basis. Having suffered serious setbacks, considerably weakened, deprived of its best leaders, the Party was undergoing a most trying period of development.

The question of the Party's past and its bolshevization was discussed for the first time at the Moscow Conference in 1925, summoned on the initiative of the Party's leadership abroad with the consent of the Executive Committee of the Communist International and attended by the survivors of the Central Committee and those Party activists who had emigrated during the 1923-1925 events. The estimate given by this conference, namely, that the Party had managed "to pass gradually and painlessly, without serious internal crises, from the period of organic development of capitalism to that of its decline, to assimilate and adapt itself to the peculiarities of the revolutionary epoch," was however exaggerated and did not correspond entirely to reality. Experience showed that the Party's transition from "the epoch of organic development of capitalism to that of its decline," was difficult, vacillating, accompanied by serious errors, as, for instance, those made during the Vladaya soldiers' insurrection on June 9, and the ultra-left errors of the leadership of the military organisation.

The assimilation of the characteristics of the revolutionary epoch was in general a hard and serious task, and it was still more difficult to grasp the specific features of the revolutionary epoch in the Balkans, where our Party



had to function. The conference correctly noted the necessity of mastering Marxism-Leninism as a guide to action, by studying our own revolutionary experience and that of the Russian Revolution. Using sound self-criticism, the Party "had to re-educate itself so as to be able to find its way in every historical situation and, taking into account the concrete conditions, to correctly lead the fight of the masses on their path towards international revolution."

The Vienna meeting of the Central Committee in 1926 did not go beyond the Moscow conference on the question of the Party's bolshevization. Indeed, it specifically stressed the task of the "ideological rallying of the Party masses around the Party banner and the Communist International on the basis of Leninism."

It was also absolutely true that the Moscow conference and the enlarged Plenum of the Central Committee in Vienna stressed the tremendous importance of the Party's bolshevization by means of studying its own experience in the light of Leninism. But the enlarged Plenum of the Central Committee and the Moscow conference erred in considering bolshevization a process of organic development, and not a fight to overcome the non-Bolshevik traditions of the "narrow" socialist period.

After the Vitosha conference, which rallied the Communist Party around the policy of the September uprising, the Second Party Conference held in Berlin late in December 1927 and the beginning of 1928 submitted to a thorough scrutiny the party's post-1923 activities, its tactics, achievements, errors and setbacks. A bitter fight had to be waged during the second conference against left and right deviations.

Already at the Moscow conference serious controversies had occurred over the appraisal of the mistakes made by the Party. The defenders of the June 9 defeatism and the supporters of the ultra-left deviation of the April 1925 events, united de facto in the struggle against the September leadership of the Party. The representatives of the September policy had to wage a fight on two fronts. After a thorough discussion of all questions, the right-wingers and left-wingers hauled down their banners and formally approved the resolutions proposed by the Party leadership.

But after the conference dissensions broke out with new vigour. The right opportunists and left sectarians united in an unprincipled bloc

against the September Party leadership. This became very apparent at the Vitosha party conference.

As a result of the Party's difficult organisational situation there were few representatives of Party organisations present at the conference and, to a large extent, their presence there was accidental. Moreover, an under-cover ultra-left sectarian faction within the Party, composed of a few petty-bourgeois intellectuals, had taken shape; they tried to create an artificial majority through underhand agitation in order to impose their own sectarian conceptions and to take over the Party leadership.

During the prolonged and stormy debates, the June 9 and right-wing defeatism was thoroughly and finally exposed and disarmed. But the ultra-left sectarian faction, abetted by Trotskyist and left-wing elements in certain other Communist Parties, although it voted for the resolutions of the September leadership, did not disarm and immediately after the conference continued and increased its factional activities.

The conference made a real attempt to provide an analysis and a general appraisal of the Party's past. It pointed out the elements which brought "narrow" socialism closer to Bolshevism and which helped the Party's orientation towards Bolshevism. It also showed up many questions on which "narrow" socialism differed from Bolshevism and which handicapped the bolshevization of the Party. But the Second Party Conference, although it made a major step forward, did not go all the way, did not clearly define the fundamental difference between "narrow" socialism and Leninism on the basic questions of the revolution. The Second Conference too, considered the bolshevization of the Party as an adaptation of revolutionary "narrow" socialism to the new conditions, and not as a fight for overcoming social-democratic vestiges within the Party and its Bolshevik (Marxist-Leninist) re-armament. Emphasising that in the post-war period the Party was "developing and functioning in general as a revolutionary party of the Bulgarian proletariat," the Second Party Conference stated that it was gradually substituting "the methods of mass revolutionary action, adaptation to the needs and requirements of the revolutionary epoch, for the methods of agitation and propaganda and of economic struggle of the pre-war period." Indeed, the conference stressed that this development "did not advance in a straight line but



through zigzags and vacillations," that the bolshevization of the Party took place through "a clash between Bolshevik tendencies pushing it and social-democratic vestiges pulling it backward." Yet at the same time it uncritically declared that "revolutionary 'narrow' socialism and the September current" had "merged in two basic and unshakable party roots as a Bolshevik Party of the Bulgarian proletariat."

The Second Party Conference characterised the September uprising as "a full negation of the June 9 tactics," as "a major turning-point in the Party's development," which laid the foundation for the "definitive and irretrievable break with the social-democratic and June 9 vestiges," as the decisive step on the Party's road to bolshevization.

In its appraisal of the "narrow" socialist period, the Second Party Conference, without identifying "narrow" socialism with Bolshevism, nevertheless stressed the similarities between "narrow" socialism and did not dwell sufficiently on the differences.

Summarising that period, I want to say again from this tribune that unfortunately we, Dimitar Blagoev's closest collaborators, were unable to make the necessary Marxist-Leninist re-appraisal of all aspects of the revolutionary past of the Party and of the Bulgarian proletariat at the proper time, and to avail ourselves of the positive and great capital of the revolutionary movement, in order to overcome, once and for all, all non-Bolshevik vestiges of the "narrow" socialist period.

That fact, along with the serious illegal situation of the Party, was exploited by various ultra-left individuals who had fortuitously penetrated the leadership and even took it over temporarily.

#### 4. *The Struggle against Left-Sectarianism in the Party and its Liquidation.*

Misusing the authority of the Communist International, posing inside the country as the real interpreter of its decisions, taking advantage of the difficult conditions of illegality, and supported also by undercover enemy elements within the Executive Committee of the Communist International and in certain national Communist Parties of that time, the left sectarians Iskrov, Georgi Lambrev and Elia Vasilev (Boiko) succeeded, through organised factional activity, in holding a plenum of the Central Committee during the summer of 1929 and in fact taking over the Party leadership.

Under the guise of the bolshevization of the Party, the left-sectarians actually pursued an anti-Bolshevik course. They put forward the slogan "extirpation of narrow socialism," waged an insidious struggle against loyal Party members of long standing, against the revolutionary past of the Party, and pushed the Party along the disastrous road leading to isolation from the masses. This was made easier by the inactivity of a number of old and well-known Party comrades inside the country, who had withdrawn from Party work at that time.

The left sectarian faction became the main obstacle to the bolshevization of the Party. At the very moment when the fascist dictatorship was persecuting our Party and seeking to break it up from within and to smash its leadership, it found its best allies in the leaders of the left sectarian faction. What is more, as was subsequently revealed in the U.S.S.R. in connection with the exposure of foreign enemy agencies inside the Bolshevik Party and some other Communist Parties, some of these left sectarian leaders were in the service of these agencies.

Yet in spite of the temporary ascendancy of the left sectarian faction, there existed sufficient sound forces within the Party to lead the struggle of the working people on a local scale during the new upsurge of the labour movement.

The stagnation which had gripped the entire labour and progressive movement after the 1923-25 defeat was gradually being overcome. In 1927 the Workers' Party was formed as a legal party of the working class: trade unions were re-established. The Workers' Party, acting for the illegal Communist Party, managed in no time to win considerable authority among the masses. Signs of a new revolutionary upsurge of the masses became apparent. Big strikes broke out, major electoral victories were scored and legal possibilities began to be widely used. The Party was growing and moving boldly forward. Its successes would undoubtedly have been much greater, however, had it not been for the harmful influence of the left sectarian faction. Thus, for instance, their second plenum instead of concentrating on the Party's taking over the leadership of the new militant upsurge of the masses, entered into scholastic sectarian discussions about the Party's past and composed sheaves of resolutions which no worker could read through. And again, through the fault of



this faction, our Party could not carry to a successful conclusion the breakthrough in the front of the fascist dictatorship in the summer of 1931, as well as during the coup d'état of May 1934.

The left sectarian policy, which in reality was a Trotskyist policy, had nothing in common with the line of the Communist International and was directed against it.

1. Instead of a sober appraisal of the situation on the basis of a concrete Marxist analysis of the forces in action, general formulas of Leninist-Stalinist strategy and tactics were reiterated and the conditions of the other Communist Parties were mechanically applied without taking into consideration our own concrete situation. The left sectarians took credit for the successes scored by the Party in spite of their leadership, and proclaimed as the immediate task the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship in Bulgaria.

2. Persevering and steadfast agitation among the workers and peasants for the popularisation of party slogans, for the preparation of the struggle and the mobilisation of the masses were superseded by "revolutionary" phrases and bombastic appeals for "revolutionary" action. Such typically left sectarian slogans were: "A general and open offensive," "Take over the streets," "Occupy the land" etc. The slogan of a political strike was so discredited by the left sectarians that the revolutionary trade union international was compelled specifically to condemn its use in Bulgaria.

3. Real leadership, based on a conscious adoption by the members of the party and of the mass organisations of the Party decisions and directives, gave way to rude and mechanical ordering about. The attitude of the left sectarian leadership toward the Workers' Party which our Party had created was incorrect and exceedingly harmful. Although the Workers' Party numbered among its members many workers with experience in mass work, and although it served as a transmission belt through which the Communist Party exerted its influence on the masses, its local leaders were treated as second-rank people. After the coup of May 19, 1934, when the Workers' Party and the other mass organisations were banned, the left sectarian leadership put up no opposition and hastened to declare the Workers' Party "self-liquidated."

4. Under the guise of a false "bolshevization" the entire "narrow"

socialist period of the Party was proclaimed as "Menshevik" and "anti-Bolshevik." Under the pretext of defending the September uprising, a Trotskyite "criticism" of that uprising was popularised and the September activists of the Party were ostracised. The left sectarian leadership even went so far as to sabotage the international anti-fascist campaign in connection with the Leipzig trial.

5. Having temporarily, and with the help of their Trotskyite friends from abroad, seized control of the internal leadership of the Party, the left sectarians formed themselves into a secret Trotskyite faction inside the Party. Under the guise of Leninism and using the authority of the Communist International in a double-faced way, they were destroying the basis of the Party and discrediting the revolutionary movement.

The support received by the Party, in its struggle to overcome left sectarianism, from the Communist International and from the Bolshevik Party, especially as regards the Second Plenum of the Central Committee, whose harmful decisions were rejected by the Executive Committee of the Communist International, should be gratefully acknowledged.

The resolution of the political secretariat of the Executive Committee of the Communist International of August 1934 played an exceedingly important role for our Party. It dealt with the basic problems of the Communist movement in Bulgaria and served as a solid basis for uniting the sound forces within the party on a genuine Marxist-Leninist policy.

This resolution clearly pointed out the revolutionary Marxist elements in the "narrow" socialist period which the Party should not renounce but of which it should become the "conscious protagonist and elaborator."

At the same time, it clearly showed the difference between "narrow" socialism and Leninism on the basic questions of the proletarian revolution. It defined the September uprising as a decisive turning-point in the party's bolshevization, as the beginning of a Bolshevik crystallisation amidst the old and new Party cadres which was impeded by the insufficiently consistent ideological struggle of the Party leadership against the vestiges of the non-Bolshevik traditions and against the infantile disease of leftism.

The resolution called on the Party to completely overcome those vestiges of the "narrow" socialist period which impeded it during its transition from a purely agitational and propagandist organisation to a Party



struggling for power. It also summoned it to unite around a common platform for a struggle against the main danger—opportunism, tailism, and passivity, as well as against left sectarianism.

The Political Secretariat of the Executive Committee of the Communist International told the Party to fight resolutely against factionalism and the rising danger of disintegration into factions.

The process of uniting the Party on the platform of the Communist International was impeded by the left sectarians, who adopted it in words but hid from the Party and the International their own disagreement with it, proceeding to revise it in a left sectarian spirit.

The Party's very existence and development was again at stake. All forces had to be mobilized in order to save it by liquidating the left sectarian line: by taking the Party leadership out of the hands of the left sectarians and by making a decisive about turn from "revolutionary" phrasemongering to truly Bolshevik mass work and struggle. Only a rapid overcoming of sectarian distortions in all phases of its work could enable the Party to re-establish its contacts with the masses and to build a united people's anti-fascist front for the overthrow of the military fascist dictatorship. In spite of serious difficulties, due to the conditions of illegality and fascist terror, our Party, with the aid of the Communist International, succeeded in coping with this important task.

### *5. The New Bolshevik Line of the Party.*

The 7th Congress of the Communist International brought about a change in policy of the Communist Parties, by placing as the basic and immediate task the struggle against fascism as the greatest threat to the working class and the toilers, to peace, and to the freedom of the peoples. It was necessary to rally the working class, and on that basis to create a powerful people's anti-fascist front, in order to stop the fascist onslaught and to smash fascism. The translation of the united front into practice made it incumbent on the Communists to overcome the smug sectarianism within their own ranks which had become a deeply rooted evil. By overestimating the degree of revolutionization of the masses and underestimating the struggle for the immediate interests and rights of the toil-

ers, sectarianism led to passivity in the face of the fascist offensive. By substituting abstract propaganda and left doctrinaire phrases for a mass policy, by stereotyping the slogans and tactics of all countries and by disregarding the specific peculiarities existing in every particular nation, sectarianism delayed the growth of the Communist Parties, impeded the unfolding of a genuine mass struggle, and blocked the winning over of the broad masses of toilers by the Communist Parties. At the same time, the Communist Parties had to be vigilant also with respect to the right danger which was bound to grow with the wide application of the united front, and to manifest itself through spontaneity and automatism, depreciation of the role of the Party and vacillation at the decisive moment.

This was the fundamental thesis of the 7th Congress of the Communist International. Its decisions played a decisive role in helping our Party make an about turn and become truly Bolshevik in character. The resolution of the Communist International against the left sectarian leadership in connection with the events of May 19, 1934, had already raised sharply the question of changing that self-styled leadership which was completely incapable of bringing about a turn in the party. This change was carried out completely, early in 1936.

The new Party leadership, in its open letter of October 1, 1935, basing itself on the 1934 resolution of the Communist International, gave a clear exposure of the essence of the left opportunist sectarian policy of the preceding years, when "certain petty-bourgeois doctrinaire elements—sectarians and factionists—had temporarily gained the upper hand in the party leadership and imposed their left opportunist sectarian policy." Basing itself on the decisions of the 7th Congress of the Communist International, the open letter formulated as the fundamental tasks of the party: (a) to build a united people's anti-fascist front and (b) to organise the working class, through a general consolidation of the Party.

The decisions of the 6th plenary session of the Party in February 1936 constitute a correct and consistent elaboration of its new Bolshevik line in the light of the decisions of the 7th World Congress. This elaboration consisted in the following:

1. As the fundamental immediate task the Plenum stressed the building of a people's anti-fascist front of all anti-fascist organisations in the struggle



for the following basic political demands: re-establishment of the Tirnovo Constitution, elections to the National Assembly according to the old electoral law, repeal of all anti-communist decrees, dissolution of all fascist organisations. All the sound people's forces were to be united firmly behind these demands.

At the same time the Party proposed to all organisations of working people a common struggle for the satisfaction of their basic needs. It expressed its readiness to support the government of a people's anti-fascist front which would carry through the above platform, although it considered that a radical improvement of the situation of the masses and the fullest and most consistent defence of popular liberties, of peace and national independence, could only be achieved by a Soviet Government in Bulgaria.

2. The Plenum completely approved the dismissal of the left sectarian leadership and the entrusting of the Party leadership to tested supporters of its new Bolshevik line. At the same time it stressed the need for sharper criticism of the left sectarian policy in order to expose its anti-Leninist and Trotskyite character before the rank and file, the need of carrying out thorough-going and systematic education, for a conscious assimilation, not in words but in deeds, of the new Party line.

3. The Plenum worked out a detailed directive for rallying and enlisting in practical work all loyal Party cadres, young and old, for a genuine and conscious unification of the Party on a Marxist-Leninist basis and around its Central Committee.

Thanks to this new Bolshevik line, the Party re-established its contact with the masses, and its role in the political life of the nation increased rapidly.

Although not without difficulties, the people's anti-fascist front grew despite the resistance and sabotage of the right-wing leaders of the other non-fascist parties. The anti-fascist front and, in particular, the Party proved a great political force at the parliamentary and council elections.

The main internal enemies, against whom the people's anti-fascist front waged its struggle, were the protagonists of fascism—the government of King Boris, and Tsankov's so-called Social Movement. The main external enemy which threatened peace and Bulgaria's national independence was

Hitler Germany and fascist Italy. Against this double peril, the people's anti-fascist front mobilised the masses for a struggle for peace, against the instigators of war and their Bulgarian lackeys, for defence of Bulgaria's national independence, for friendly relations with all neighbouring countries, for collective security and common defence of all democratic nations, big and small, which pursued a policy of peace and democracy, against war and fascism.

The feverish preparations of Nazi Germany for a new world war, Hitler's aggression in Austria and Czechoslovakia and the attempts of the German imperialists, with the aid of Bulgarian monarcho-fascism, to rule Bulgaria and include it in their *Lebensraum*, and then the outbreak of World War II in the wake of the German aggression against Poland, threatened to engulf Bulgaria and the Balkans in the war. The Party correctly felt that the U.S.S.R. was the one sure factor for the preservation of peace in the Balkans and the independence of the Balkan peoples.

The Party, therefore, raised as the first task of Bulgaria's foreign policy the conclusion of a pact of friendship and mutual aid with the Soviet Union. Should Bulgaria, however, find herself faced by the threat of aggression or actually be attacked by either of the two warring parties in the hopes of pushing her into the war, the Bulgarian people would fight with all their forces for the defence of freedom and independence linking this fight with the defence of the Soviet Union.

Under these conditions, the Party directed its main efforts toward a unification of all democratic forces in defence of peace and national independence, of the liberties and basic needs of the masses, against war, reaction and capitalist plunder.

The Soviet Government's offer in December 1940, through its emissary Sobolev, to conclude with the Bulgarian Government a pact of friendship and mutual aid, bore out the Party's correct stand for a pro-Soviet orientation and strengthened its position among the people. It became the centre of a powerful popular movement for the conclusion of a pact of friendship with the U.S.S.R. Outside this people's movement there remained only the openly capitalist and reactionary elements from both camps—the pro-Germans and the pro-British—who were united in their hatred against the U.S.S.R. and Bolshevism.



The 7th Party plenum in January 1941 took place under the banner of the struggle against Bulgaria's entry into the war. The Party realized that the fascist government of King Boris, in rejecting the Soviet offer, had hitched Bulgaria to the bandwagon of Nazi Germany—a circumstance which could not but increase the approaching danger of Bulgaria's being drawn into the vortex of war. It carried through a still more energetic propaganda among the masses for a pact with the U.S.S.R. and against participation in the war.

As a result, disorders broke out in many localities among the mobilised Bulgarian soldiers along the frontier, who refused to obey the orders of their officers. Slogans were put forward for a return home, against Bulgaria's entering the war on the side of Nazi Germany. The Hitlerite occupationists and their Bulgarian quislings realized quite clearly that Bulgaria was far from constituting a safe rear, that their criminal policy could not rely on the support of the Bulgarian people.

Hitler's foul aggression against the U.S.S.R. on June 21, 1941 basically changed the international situation. World War II, which had started as a war between two imperialist camps, became a war of the freedom-loving peoples, headed by the Soviet Union, against Nazi aggression. From its very outbreak our Party adopted a firm stand against the Nazi German bloc and its Bulgarian hirelings. As early as June 22 the Party's Central Committee issued a manifesto to the Bulgarian people, in which the position was clearly formulated.

“Never before in history has there been a more brigandlike, more counter-revolutionary and imperialist war than the one fascism is now waging against the U.S.S.R. Hence, there is no juster and more progressive war than the one on whose issue will depend the destinies of all nations. So just a war cannot but enjoy the sympathy and support of every honest and progressive person in the world . . . The Bulgarian people, who in their overwhelming majority harbour a deep love for the fraternal Soviet peoples and pin on them their greatest hopes for a better future, are faced with the colossal task of preventing their country and army from being used for the brigand purposes of German fascism . . .

“Be vigilant and resolutely oppose all measures which the government may take to involve us in the war or to put our country in the service of

the fascist brigands! Not one grain of Bulgarian wheat, not one piece of Bulgarian bread for the German fascists and plunderers! Not a single Bulgarian in their service!"

In the same manifesto the Central Committee characterised the Hitler aggression against the U.S.S.R. as a "reckless adventure," in which "Hitler is bound to break his neck."

On June 24, 1941, the Political Bureau of the Party began to prepare the Bulgarian people for an armed struggle against the Nazi occupationists and their local quislings. A special military commission was formed to carry through this preparation. Armed military units were organised for diversionist and sabotage activities with the aim of disrupting German communications, of destroying plants and warehouses serving the Nazis, and of organising workers for the sabotage of production, (as a result, in several plants output fell by 40 to 50 per cent), of inducing peasants to conceal agricultural produce, etc. The slogan was to attack German units and bases and in general to create in the country difficult conditions for the Germans and their local quislings, and to disrupt and paralyse their war effort. At the same time the Party proceeded to intensify its work in the army under the slogan "Not a soldier for the Eastern Front!" Among the soldiers of the occupation troops of Yugoslavia, the slogan was to fraternise with the Yugoslav partisans and to go over to their side. As early as 1941 the first partisan units were born in the districts of Razlog, Batak, Karlovo, Eastern Sredna Gora, Sevlievo, Gabrovo etc.

This heroic struggle involved many sacrifices and sufferings: scores of fighters dangled from the gallows or were shot, partisan heads were paraded in towns and villages, prisons and concentration camps were overcrowded. Yet in spite of the bestial terror, the struggle gained in momentum. The greater the setbacks the Germans suffered on the Eastern front as a result of the Soviet victories, the clearer became the perspectives of Hitler Germany's inevitable defeat and the brighter the conditions for rallying all patriotic forces among the people in the Fatherland Front, which was founded on our Party's initiative towards the middle of 1942 with the publication of its programme.

The Fatherland Front programme clearly and categorically stated that Hitler's plan for world domination was bound to end with the downfall



of Nazi Germany and that the policy of the King Boris government, which had turned Bulgaria into a vassal of Hitler, was directed against the people and would lead the nation to disaster. Hence, it was the supreme duty of the Bulgarian people, its army and patriotic intelligentsia, to unite behind the great Fatherland Front for the salvation of Bulgaria. The programme demanded that Bulgaria's brigand alliance with Nazi Germany should be broken immediately; that the German aggressors should be expelled from Bulgarian soil; that national wealth and labour should be protected against foreign incursions; that the political rights of the working people should be re-established, extended and consolidated; that the army should be taken out of the hands of the monarcho-fascist clique and transformed into a people's army, so that the material and moral forces of our people should be added to the efforts of other peoples, under the leadership of the U.S.S.R., for the complete defeat of the German imperialists. The programme urged all anti-fascist forces to unite in the Fatherland Front and called for the establishment of a Fatherland Front government to ensure our political and economic development as a free and independent nation, closely allied with the other freedom-loving peoples and especially with the Soviet Union.

The Party considered that the struggle for the destruction of domestic fascism embraced all the essential problems of the life and future of the working people and of the entire nation. Without the destruction of the fascist regime the country could not be wrested from the fascist camp and saved from catastrophe, ruin and retrogression. The more evident the inevitable and ignominious end of Nazi Germany became, the more fully the Bulgarian people realised that our fascist regime, which had completely identified its fate with Hitler's slave owners' policy, represented the main danger which had to be immediately removed. Bulgaria's liberation from the shackles of fascism followed from the entire international and domestic position, and became the central task of the working class, of the working people of town and countryside, and of all truly democratic and patriotic forces.

Such, then, was the national and democratic platform of our Party during the war for the liberation of the country from fascism and German occupation. It met with a deep response, rallied the bulk of the people

under the banner of the Fatherland Front and became a truly national cause.

The Party considered that the realisation of this programme was an inevitable and decisive stage for the country's further development on the road to radical political, economic and social transformation.

Armed with this militant programme, the Party exerted all its energies quickly to make the Fatherland Front a truly national movement, to broaden the resistance movement and give it a mass character.

During the second half of 1942 there was a considerable surge forward in the struggle of the masses against the Nazi occupationists and their Bulgarian tools. In several localities numerically small partisan units grew into organised detachments enjoying wide support among the people. In the winter of 1942-43 partisan detachments in Sredna Gora waged memorable and epic struggles against some 20,000 gendarmes and soldiers. During March-April 1943, by C.C. decision, the country was divided into 12 guerilla combat zones with a unified military leadership. The attacks of partisan detachments against the Germans and the quisling authorities in towns and villages went hand in hand with broad political activity among the population. The more defeats the Nazi hordes suffered on the Eastern front, especially after the blow at Stalingrad, the fiercer became the partisan struggle and the more the people from all parts of the country were drawn into the partisan movement.

Towards the end of 1943 and the beginning of 1944, an army of 100,000 soldiers and police under fascist command were involved in the struggle against the partisan movement. The inability of Hitler and King Boris to send a single Bulgarian soldier to the Eastern front was primarily due to the fact that the main forces of the Bulgarian army were fighting the partisans, both in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

It was a truly epic period, a real test for our Party and for the Bulgarian people. We can safely say that our Party, backed mainly by the Communist youth, in spite of terrific casualties, bestial terror and the opportunist vacillations of some Party members, passed this test with honour. This period will remain inscribed in gold letters in the annals of our Party and our people, who can justly pride themselves on their heroic partisans, men and women, and those who aided them, whom the Party managed to organ-



ise and lead to battle against the German occupationists and Bulgarian fascists.

The growing scope of the partisan movement, helped by the victorious advance of the Soviet Army and the fascists' failure to cope with it, inspired the people and consolidated their faith in ultimate victory, emboldened and activised our allies in the Fatherland Front.

The Fatherland Front grew in the course of the struggle for the basic needs of the masses and against Bulgaria's spoliation and enslavement by the German fascist imperialists. Our Party was its sparking plug, but other non-fascist parties and organisations were drawn into its activity.

In 1944, the serious and irreparable defeats of the German hordes on all fronts, the lightning advance of the Soviet armies towards Germany, the capitulation of fascist Italy, the approach of the Fourth Ukrainian army towards Bulgaria's frontiers—all this hastened the downfall of Nazi Germany. Panic and disintegration set in among our local quislings and the ruling monarcho-fascist clique. Their attempts to drown the partisan movement in blood failed. Their attempt to split the Fatherland Front also failed. Intent on forestalling the maturing people's uprising, they turned through the Bagrianov government and then through the Muraviev-Gichev government to the Anglo-American Chief of Staff with an offer of unconditional surrender. They hoped, in case of an Anglo-American occupation, to escape punishment for their crimes and to preserve the shaky foundations of the monarcho-capitalist regime.

This scheme, however, was foiled by the lightning advance of the Soviet armies and the vigilance of our Party.

On August 26, 1944, our Party's Central Committee addressed to all its organisations, functionaries and members the historic Circular No. 4, calling for the immediate overthrow, through an armed uprising, of the fascist Regency and the Bagrianov government and for the establishment of a Fatherland Front government. This circular stated among other things:

“The 12 th hour has struck for Bulgaria.

“Its fate today depends solely on the people and the patriotic army. Our country is doomed unless the self-imposed Regency and pro-German government of Bagrianov are immediately overthrown and the alliance with Germany broken.

“The Party, the Fatherland Front, the entire Bulgarian people and the army, are faced by the imperative task of gathering their forces and rising to a bold and decisive armed struggle.

“The Fatherland Front is the only political force capable of saving the country by immediate bold and decisive action.”

The same day the general staff of the People's Partisan Army issued the order:

“Proceed with the general offensive and establish Fatherland Front authorities on a local basis. Direct the main blows against the big centres, especially where you can count on the support of separate army units.”

Conscious of its historic mission, at the head of the proletariat, the Party made full use of its past militant experience—victories and setbacks—gathered all its forces, staked its immense authority, counting on the decisive aid of the Soviet army, in order to mobilise the Bulgarian people united in the Fatherland Front for the armed overthrow of the most dangerous and devilish bastion of capitalism and reaction in Bulgaria—the monarcho-fascist dictatorship.

When on September 7 the Soviet armies stepped onto Bulgarian soil, the armed uprising was already in full swing. In Plovdiv, Gabrovo and in the Pernik mines general strikes broke out. In Sofia the tramway workers went on strike and the population came out on the streets, while in Pleven, Varna and Sliven the prisons were stormed. At the same time partisan detachments occupied many towns and villages. Under the iron pressure of the Soviet armies the German hordes beat a hasty retreat from Bulgaria. Our soldiers refused to carry out the orders of the reactionary officers and deserted to the partisans.

The victory of the uprising was ensured. On September 9 under the hammer blows of the united people's masses, assisted by the partisan detachments and the revolutionary soldiers and officers, the hated monarcho-fascist dictatorship collapsed and the first People's Government in Bulgaria—the Fatherland Front Government— was established. However, the greatest credit for the victory of the September 9 uprising and the liberation of our country from the German fascist yoke is due to the heroic fraternal Soviet army and its far-sighted leader, Generalissimo



Stalin. The Party, the working class, and all our working people will remain forever grateful for that.

## II. THE SEPTEMBER 9 UPRISING CLEARED THE PATH FOR THE BUILDING OF SOCIALISM IN OUR COUNTRY.

### 1. *From September 9th 1944 to the Grand National Assembly Elections.*

The September 9 armed people's uprising was a turning point in our history.

On September 9, 1944, political power in our country was wrested from the hands of the capitalist bourgeoisie and the monarcho-fascist minority of exploiters and passed into the hands of the vast majority, the working people from towns and villages, under the guidance of the working class and its vanguard—the Communist Party. Having triumphed with the decisive aid of the heroic Red Army, the September 9 uprising cleared the road for building socialism in our country.

The combination of the September 9, 1944 people's anti-fascist uprising and the victorious advance of the Soviet army in the Balkans ensured the triumph of the uprising and gave it great impetus. The hatred against fascism accumulated in the course of two decades, and the determination of the working people to do away with it, burst forth irrepressibly and swept away the fascist regime at one blow. The anti-popular bourgeois-fascist police apparatus was smashed to pieces and a people's militia was formed to crush the opposition of the fascist elements and to defend the people's uprising. Power was wrested from the capitalist class, united around the monarchy and closely allied with German imperialism. It passed into the hands of the militant alliance of workers, peasants, artisans and intellectuals united in the Fatherland Front, and under the leadership of our Party. The state power radically changed in character: the instrument for the oppression and exploitation of the masses in the interests of the capitalists was dismantled and a people's government was created, as an instrument for the annihilation of capitalism and for the gradual liberation of the working people from exploitation of all kinds.

True, the old bourgeois state machine was not completely smashed on

September 9. The Communists were still a minority in the newly formed cabinet. Many key posts were still in the hands of individuals some of whom later proved unstable and even hostile to the people's regime. It was the Party, however, which animated the anti-fascist movement: the Party was, as it were, its sparking plug. In many localities power was actually in the hands of the Fatherland Front committees. Our Party held the Ministry of the Interior as well as the newly-created Institute for Assistant Commanders in the army. This was in the interest of the people, because only our Party could organise the suppression of the defeated monarcho-fascist clique, ensure internal order and the successful participation of the reorganised army in the war against Hitler Germany. The Party's great power and influence among the people, as well as its position in the Fatherland Front Committees, enabled it to assume in practice a leading role in the government and to wage a successful fight against the fascist reactionaries and their stooges within the ranks of the Fatherland Front.

New people, springing up from the midst of the working class, came to the fore. Vast masses of people, long oppressed under the jackboot of fascist dictatorship, awoke to active political life and, under the leadership of the Party, played their part in various administrative bodies. A new type of people's democratic government was created and perfected.

Although its immediate tasks were of a democratic character, the September 9 uprising could not but shake the capitalist system in our country to its very foundation, thus transcending the limits of bourgeois democracy.

This, then, was the salient feature of the September 9 uprising.

You cannot eliminate fascism, grant democratic rights to the working masses, consolidate and develop these rights without challenging the very rule of capitalism, for fascism is nothing but the ruthless, terrorist dictatorship of big business. The eradication of fascism cannot be completed without challenging big business. Democratic rights cannot be granted to the working people if big business preserves its political and economic power. The September 9 uprising, therefore, undertaking the solution of problems of a democratic character together with the great national problem of our people's participation in the war for the final destruction of



Hitlerism, could not but turn subsequently against the domination of big business, deal it further serious blows and prepare the ground for its abolition, for the abolition of the entire capitalist system and the transition to socialism.

However, in order to translate these possibilities into reality our Party had to wage a bitter struggle.

The primary task was to defend and consolidate the victory of September 9. The Party had to reach clarity about the conditions under which the uprising was carried out, about the most imperative measures to be taken, and about the possible scope of the tasks which could be immediately fulfilled.

The September 9 uprising took place while the war against Nazi Germany was still on. The victorious ending of the war took priority of course over all other tasks and nothing could be undertaken which might possibly impede victory. We must not overlook this important circumstance nor should we forget, when appraising our Party's activity during the period of the country's development after September 9 until the end of the war and the signing of the peace treaty, that our country, as a former satellite of Nazi Germany, was under the supervision of an Allied Control Commission on which were British and American representatives antagonistic to the people's regime. On the other hand, in the interest of her national existence and in defence of her freedom, Bulgaria had to join in the war against Nazi Germany on the side and under the command of the Soviet Union.

A sober estimate of the international and national situation was imperative under these circumstances. Those questions only could be tackled which were already ripe for solution so as not to skip any stages in the development of the struggle of the working class and working people of town and countryside against capitalism. In this respect our Party was fully aware of its historic responsibility before the working class and all working people.

On September 9 and afterwards our Party went all out to rally the democratic and patriotic forces of the entire nation in the name of the final and ruthless destruction of the monarcho-fascist clique and to mobilise all the country's material and moral resources in the common fight of all freedom-

loving peoples under the leadership of the Soviet Union. Our Party carried out this central task successfully. Bulgaria contributed to the best of its abilities to the liberation of the Balkans from the Hitlerite invaders and to their final defeat. "Everything for the front, everything for victory in the war against Hitler Germany"—that was the supreme slogan of the Party, of the Fatherland Front and of the nation during this period. All other questions were subordinated to this. The Party fought against every departure from this slogan. It opposed the leftist deviations in its own ranks, the impatience of individual comrades, who thought we should immediately proceed with the socialist transformation of society.

The policy of the greatest possible unification of all the people's anti-fascist, democratic and patriotic forces, including anti-German elements from amongst the bourgeoisie, for the total destruction of the fascist clique, victorious participation in the war, defence and safeguarding of our national independence, territorial integrity and state sovereignty, was the only correct policy. Its realisation was a pre-condition and guarantee of the preservation and further development of the historic achievements of the September 9 uprising. It enabled the Party to keep close to the masses, to strengthen its positions and to isolate the enemies of the uprising and of the people's authority. Our Party's central committee carried through this policy firmly and steadfastly.

A smashing blow was dealt to the openly fascist elements during that period. Severe punishment was meted out to the representatives of fascism and the German agents responsible for our brigand's alliance with German imperialism and for bringing the nation to the brink of a third disaster. The fascist organisations were dissolved. The political, economic and cultural organisations of the working people grew by leaps and bounds. Many major democratic reforms were carried out. Women were granted full equality and given all facilities to participate actively in public life. Broad vistas opened up for the youth. Full equality was also granted to the national minorities and their schools were given state support. A law on landed property was passed, limiting holdings to two hundred decares (except Dobrudja, where the limit is 300 decares). Another law provided for the confiscation of all illegally acquired wealth. Measures were taken to ensure the popular character of the army. The institution



of assistant-commanders, tested sons of the people and fighters against fascism, was introduced into the army.

The entire state apparatus was overhauled and put on a new, popular basis. The democratic rights and liberties of the broad masses were consolidated. These and similar changes found their expression and confirmation in the abolition of the monarchy and the proclamation of the People's Republic.

On the economic front all efforts were concentrated on the rehabilitation of our war-ravaged national economy, ruthlessly plundered by the Germans and further damaged by two consecutive droughts. But the time was not yet ripe for major economic changes. The war was still in progress and Bulgaria's still unsettled international status, with the presence of the Allied Control Commission in Sofia, made an immediate assault on the economic basis of capitalist reaction impossible. The big estates, banks and commercial enterprises remained in the hands of private capitalists.

It is true that the capitalists were no longer absolute masters of their enterprises and of their capital. Public control was instituted. The role of the trade unions grew immensely. But however much the rule of the capitalists was limited, they remained the owners of their enterprises and they exploited this fact in order to hinder in every possible way the development of production and of government measures. Possessing an economic base, they were able to exert a certain pressure on the people's regime. It was still necessary to wage a hard struggle completely to eliminate the capitalist elements from their political and economic positions.

The September 9 blow against the people's enemies as represented by the fascist clique was so powerful that for a time the capitalist bourgeoisie crept under cover. However, this did not mean that they had abandoned their intention of turning back the clock of history.

With their economic base and backed by reactionary American and British circles, our capitalist bourgeoisie soon attempted to translate these hopes and intentions into reality. They had their own agents inside the Fatherland Front in the right-wing reactionary elements who had hidden themselves in some of the Fatherland Front Parties. Not yet ready to start an open struggle against the people's regime, they made

use of these reactionary elements who soon after September 9 began to wage a fierce fight against the Communist Party and to challenge its leading role, while striving to disrupt our economy, hinder the carrying out of government measures, discredit the Party, weaken the Fatherland Front and prepare the ground for a restoration.

Our Party had to organize the struggle of the working people for decisive resistance against the concerted and growing efforts of domestic and international reaction to subvert the gains of September 9. It had to be very vigilant and display great powers of manoeuvre, tact and determination in order to emerge as victor in this tough struggle. Our Party, under the leadership of the Central Committee, fulfilled this task with honour. It came up to the mark during that period as the leader of the Fatherland Front, of the workers and of the entire people.

The Bulgarian working people remember with what energy and determination the Party called them out into the streets against the notorious "fourth decree" of Damian Velchev, by which the reactionary elements inside the Fatherland Front government wanted to save from the people's wrath their erstwhile butchers who had hidden in the army, and to use them as cadres for staging their plots. At the same time our Party unmasked the self-styled Agrarian "leader," the notorious foreign agent Gemeto (G. M. Dimitrov), on whom the reactionary Anglo-American circles were banking in the struggle against our people's regime. Gemeto attempted to organise the right-wing reactionary elements in the Fatherland Front in an anti-communist bloc. These people tried to abolish the Fatherland Front committees, pretending that they had already become out-of-date, to transform the Fatherland Front into an ordinary inter-party coalition, and to oppose Bulgaria's participation in the anti-fascist war together with and under the leadership of the Soviet army. They carried out an insidious propaganda against the People's Militia and the People's Courts, preached defeatism at the front and in the rear and engaged in defeatist activities.

Our Party succeeded in exposing Gemeto and his friends in the eyes of the broad masses as enemy agents, and isolated and smashed them by seeking an ever closer alliance with the sound forces in the Fatherland Front and especially with the Agrarian Union. The infamous Dr. G. M.

Dimitrov 15



Dimitrov soon became a general without an army and despised and repudiated, hid in the American Legation in Sofia and fled ignominiously to the United States.

The unsuccessful debut and failure of Gemeto, as the chief agent of American and British imperialism in Bulgaria, compelled the latter to seek other tools. With the cessation of hostilities the pressure of British and American reactionary circles on our country increased. Under their direct orders Nikola Petkov and Grigor Chesmedjiev and their followers split off from the Fatherland Front and formed a vicious anti-popular opposition—the unconcealed agency of American imperialism.

The still unsettled international status of our country, the open intervention of the American imperialists in our domestic affairs (the postponement of the elections scheduled for August 26, 1945), the considerable economic, supply and other difficulties due to German robbery and the ravages of war, created favourable conditions for the opposition leaders to start subversive and disintegrating activity against the Fatherland Front, the people's power and our Party. Nevertheless, the anti-popular opposition suffered a great fiasco. The boycott of the elections for the 27th Ordinary National Assembly proved a failure. In the subsequent elections for the Grand National Assembly the Fatherland Front won a brilliant victory, winning over 70 per cent of the votes, notwithstanding all the blackmail, threats of foreign intervention, demagoguery, anti-communist slander and distortion of the Fatherland Front programme engaged in by the opposition during the electoral campaign. Our Party alone got more than 50 per cent of the votes and a clear majority in the Grand National Assembly.

The results of these elections showed that the working people put their complete trust in our Party, as the leading force in the administration of the country and in its socialist reconstruction. In a normal and free election on the basis of a general and equal electoral law with secret ballot, the leading role of our Party in the Fatherland Front and in the nation was confirmed also in a parliamentary way. The Party could now march forward still more firmly and confidently on the road opened up by the September 9 popular uprising.

Despite the active resistance of the opposition, a peace treaty was

concluded and diplomatic relations with the U.S.A. and Great Britain resumed. The broad educational work carried out by the Party and the Fatherland Front among the peasants and townsfolk temporarily misled by the opposition completely isolated the opposition from the people. Repudiated by the people, the opposition leaders began to hatch plots for the violent overthrow of the people's authority with the aid of foreign intervention, which later brought about the downfall of Nikola Petkov's pseudo-Agrarian Union.

Under the leadership of our Party several reactionary plots were uncovered and liquidated. The same fate befell the conspiracy of Damian Velchev's group. The army was purged of reactionary officers.

Our Party brought the struggle against the reactionary opposition to a close, fighting for the greatest possible unification of all sound democratic and patriotic forces under the banner of the Fatherland Front. It completely exposed the national treachery of the opposition leaders who had become foreign agents. This was a sharp class struggle. The enemies of the working class were also enemies of our nation. At the same time, the Party did its utmost to consolidate the positions of the working class, to strengthen the alliance between the workers and peasants and to close the ranks of the Fatherland Front. It based its activity on the idea that henceforth it would have to lead the growing democratic political army of the Fatherland Front by making proper use of the forces and possibilities of all its various sections for the country's democratic development. It realised that particular groups and individuals, vacillating and inconsistent Fatherland Front supporters, would drop off from this army, depending on the character of the tasks it would have to grapple with. It understood that within this army a consistent fight had to be waged against the agents of fascism and capitalist reaction. It also knew that in the course of common work and struggle under the leadership of the Communist Party, the different detachments of this army would get closer together, the Fatherland Front would become more firmly united and the authority and dominant role of our Party within it would continue to grow.

Our Party's policy for the greatest possible unification of all democratic and patriotic forces under the banner of the Fatherland Front undoubtedly consolidated the positions of the working class, led to our people's



complete victory over reaction and ensured the carrying out of the Fatherland Front programme.

The dominant role of the working class was clearly expressed in the composition of the new Fatherland Front government, formed after the elections to the Grand National Assembly. The key positions were occupied by Communists and trusted Fatherland Front leaders.

The Fatherland Front was also consolidated. Its right-wing elements were eliminated (Damian Velchev, Yurukov and their like). Our main ally, the Agrarian Union, under the leadership of its tested leaders, supporters of the Fatherland Front, weeded out the vacillating and double-faced elements from its ranks and openly declared itself in favour of a militant alliance of peasants and workers under working class leadership, of socialist construction and of the socialist transformation of agriculture on the basis of co-operative farms and a consistent policy of rendering powerless and liquidating the kulak exploiters in the villages. Mutual confidence and understanding between the Fatherland Front parties increased.

The offensive of domestic and international reaction was thus beaten off. The struggle ended with the victory of the working class and the people. An exceedingly important phase of the hard struggle of our Party and of the Fatherland Front for the successful defence of the historic gains of the September 9 uprising came to a close.

In this context it must be emphasized that if the assault of domestic and international reaction during that period did not assume the form of open armed action, this was due to the resolute measures of the people's government, to the vigilance and energy of our Party, and also to no small extent to the presence on our soil of units of the Soviet liberation army, which by itself practically paralysed reaction.

## 2. *Laying the Foundations of Socialism in Bulgaria.*

The victory of the people under the guidance of our Party over the attempt of capitalist reaction to set back the clock of history created the conditions for speeding up the political and economic development of our country, for proceeding to bring about basic transformations and carry out constructive tasks of our people's regime.

Under the conditions created by the elections to the Grand National

Assembly and the formation of a government under the direct leadership of our Party, there could be no further development of the productive forces, of the national economy and of the well-being of the working people without a radical encroachment on the economic basis of the capitalist class. Bulgaria's experience confirmed the thesis of Lenin and Stalin that under decaying capitalism, when the inherent insoluble crisis of bourgeois democracy gives birth to fascism, no serious and lasting democratic changes are possible, no progress is feasible, without attacking the very foundations of capitalism, without taking steps in the direction of socialism. In this our country's task was greatly eased by the fraternal aid received from a strong socialist state—the U.S.S.R.

The way was open for the full unfolding of the constructive tasks of the people's government, for revolutionary changes in our national economy, for the elimination of the economic basis of capitalist reaction, for the transition from capitalism to socialism, which of course cannot be realised without waging an uncompromising class struggle against the capitalist elements.

In this situation the Party had to formulate new tasks in order to arm its own cadres, the Fatherland Front and the working people with a clear perspective. There was, however, a certain lag. After the chief tasks of the preceding period were in the main solved, the Party by and large continued to be guided by its old slogans. We permitted a certain delay in the destruction of the reactionary opposition. We continued to speak of the possibility of co-ordinating the interests of private industrialists and merchants with the general interests of the state at a time when the whole situation made it possible to take radical measures for the elimination of the rule of big business in the national economy, and when factors had emerged which enabled us to advance resolutely towards laying the foundations of socialism in our country.

We have never lost track of the general perspective of our development towards socialism. We have always clearly realised that the destruction of fascism and the realisation of the many reforms which figured in the Fatherland Front programme of July 17, 1942 was intimately tied up with our ultimate goal—socialism and communism. We have said again and again that, from the viewpoint of our Party as the vanguard of the working



class, the complete realisation of the Fatherland Front programme meant the creation of the necessary conditions for our people to advance to socialism. We always stressed that there was no contradiction between our Fatherland Front policy and the struggle to unite all democratic and progressive forces in the Fatherland Front for the realisation of its programme, on the one hand, and the struggle for socialism, on the other. But at that time the transition to socialism still seemed to us a question for the comparatively distant future and the international and domestic situation seemed to us not yet suitable for the application of such radical measures.

Meanwhile, the Fatherland Front programme, as proclaimed in 1942 and specified after September 9 in the declaration of the first Fatherland Front government, had by the end of 1946 already been in the main fulfilled. What is more, with the proclamation of the people's republic and the elaboration of the Two-Year Plan, we had already gone beyond the first Fatherland Front programme. The development of the revolutionary process started on September 9 made it indispensable to take decisive measures for the liquidation of large capitalist private property, for starting a consistent policy of muzzling the kulak elements in the village, for radically overhauling the entire state apparatus and for working out a new Fatherland Front programme with clearly formulated perspectives of the movement towards socialism, for a corresponding reconstruction of the Fatherland Front, for a further consolidation of the dominant role of the Party.

The lag in the rate of the economic and political development of our country shows that our Party temporarily underestimated its own forces and those of the working class and working people, and overestimated the forces of reaction. As the 16th Plenum of the Central Committee stated, our Party "lacked the necessary clarity regarding the perspectives and the pace of our movement towards socialism." It was not armed with a consistent Marxist-Leninist analysis of the September 9 turning-point and of the ensuing possibilities and failed to understand at the proper time the different stages of our development. Fortunately, however, the Party, although with a certain lag and with an insufficient theoretical examination of the problems, did manage to take action and ensure the solution of the

new tasks arising from the changed conditions.

This example confirms once again the old truth that it is easier to learn by heart the principles of Marxism-Leninism than to apply them in practice as a guide to action, correctly and in time, at every stage of social development. For the mastery of this art, the Party leaders, at the top and at the bottom, must work tirelessly and study diligently so that the Party shall neither fall behind and be late in taking necessary action nor rush ahead too far.

We shall never forget the invaluable and timely aid which we received from the great Bolshevik Party and in particular from Stalin personally, through advice and explanation on matters of our Party's policy as a leading force of the people's democracy, which enabled us quickly to correct our mistakes.

During the past year and a half, under the leadership of our Party, a series of momentous and fundamental measures were carried out which completely consolidated the people's democracy and prepared the ground for laying the economic foundations of socialism in Bulgaria.

The new Republican Constitution was adopted, which legally consolidated the historic gains of the September 9 uprising and of the people's democratic form of government and opened up prospects for the country's further development.

On the initiative and under the leadership of our Party, industry, private banks, foreign trade, domestic wholesale trade, large urban property and forests were socialised, while farm machinery and implements were bought up from the farmers. The bulk of the means of production and exchange have thus passed into public ownership.

The nationalisation of industry was the most important revolutionary measure in our economy. It consolidated our planned development on the road toward socialism. In industry, credit and transport, the public sector has come to occupy an almost monopolistic position. The same is true in foreign trade and wholesale domestic trade. In our retail domestic trade the public sector already outweighs the private sector. In agriculture and handicraft industry the public sector has grown firm roots which are becoming ever stronger through the creation of more than 70 machine and tractor stations, of over 1,000 co-operative farms with some 300,000



hectares of arable land, of state farms with almost 100,000 hectares of land, of new artisans' co-operatives, and through the rapid rise of the co-operative movement in towns and villages.

Hand in hand with these radical changes and in conformity with our people's constitution, our entire state apparatus was thoroughly overhauled and, in spite of some defects, it continues to improve as an apparatus of people's democracy.

Our Party took the initiative in reorganising the Fatherland Front under its own guidance into a unified political organisation with its own rules and a revised programme formulating the new tasks of transforming the country with a view to its forward march toward socialism. Thus, as a result of the Party's steadfast work, the coalition elements in the Fatherland Front were completely done away with. It has now become an organisation of the militant alliance of the working people of town and countryside under the generally accepted leadership of the working class headed by our Party. All parties and public organisations composing the Fatherland Front recognise today the necessity of building socialism.

The second Congress of the Fatherland Front marked a very important stage in its development. The hostile, vacillating and unstable elements which had infiltrated into the Fatherland Front with the aim of disintegrating it and undermining it from within dropped out or were expelled. The Fatherland Front only gained from that. In their place, after the second Congress, new forces came in from the ranks of the working people and their mass organisations. The Fatherland Front as a mass political organisation of the militant alliance of the working people of town and countryside, under the leadership of the proletarian class, is now stronger and more united than ever. Favourable conditions exist for closer collaboration between the Fatherland Front parties. Applying different methods of persuasion, agitation and propaganda, depending on the peculiarities of those sections wherein each is mainly working, the Fatherland Front parties are contributing to rallying as many people as possible for the common goal—the construction of the foundations of socialism by way of the people's democracy.

Today the Fatherland Front embodies the ever-increasing moral and political unity of the working people of our country—a basic condition for

bringing to a successful end the fight against the capitalist elements and the building of the foundations of socialism. The transformation of the Fatherland Front into a unified political organisation with a common programme, socialist in essence, with strict discipline and the recognised leading role of the Communist Party, is undoubtedly a great achievement. It is for this reason that we condemn every under-estimation of its significance and role. It was and continues to be a vital necessity for our country. We cannot but call to account those Communists whose scornful attitude toward the Fatherland Front brings grist to the mill of our class enemies who are principally interested in discrediting it.

It goes without saying that within the framework of the Fatherland Front some of the component parties may prefer to merge or to discontinue their independent organisational existence, whenever they consider this timely and useful. But that is their own affair.

These profound transformations and the changed correlation of the class and political forces in our country, together with the active support of the Soviet Union, paved the way for the building of the foundations of socialism in our country as an urgent, vital and practical task. This is now the general policy of our Party. At the head of the working class, closely allied to all the working people of town and countryside, it will carry out this correct general policy firmly and unflinchingly, with unshakable confidence in victory, notwithstanding all internal and especially external difficulties and obstacles.

### III. THE ESSENCE OF A PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY

The character of a people's democracy is determined by four major factors:

1) The people's democracy represents the power of the working people—of the overwhelming majority of the people, under the leadership of the working class.

That means, first, that the rule of the capitalists and landlords is overthrown and the rule of the working people from the towns and villages, under the leadership of the working class, established, that the working class as the most progressive class in contemporary society is playing the



principal role in state and public life. Second, that the state serves as an instrument in the fight of the working people against the exploiters, against all efforts and tendencies aimed at re-establishing the capitalist order and bourgeois rule.

2) The people's democracy is a state in the transitional period, destined to ensure the development of the state on the path to socialism.

That means that although the rule of the capitalists and landlords is overthrown and their property handed over to the people, the economic roots of capitalism are not yet extirpated; capitalist vestiges still persist and develop, trying to restore their rule. Therefore, the onward march towards socialism is possible only by waging a relentless class struggle against the capitalist elements and for their liquidation.

Only by advancing directly on the road to the achievement of socialism can the people's democracy stabilise itself and fulfil its historic mission. Should it cease to fight against the exploiting classes and to eliminate them, the latter would inevitably gain the upper hand and would bring about its downfall.

3) The people's democracy is built in collaboration and friendship with the Soviet Union.

Just as the liberation of our country from the fetters of imperialism and the establishment of people's democracy were made possible by the aid and liberating role of the U.S.S.R. in the fight against fascist Germany and its satellites, so the further development of our people's democracy presupposes the safeguarding and further promotion of close relations and sincere collaboration, mutual aid and friendship between our state and the Soviet State. Any tendency toward weakening this collaboration with the U.S.S.R. is directed against the very existence of the people's democracy in our country.

4) The people's democracy belongs to the democratic anti-imperialist camp.

A) Only by joining in the united democratic anti-imperialist camp, headed by the mighty Soviet State, can every people's democracy ensure its independence, sovereignty and safety against the aggression of the imperialist forces.

B) Under the conditions of the military collapse of the fascist aggressor

states, of the abrupt sharpening of the general capitalist crisis, of the immense strengthening of the power of the Soviet Union and of the existing close collaboration with the U.S.S.R. and the new democracies, our country and the other new democracies were enabled to realise the transition from capitalism to socialism without the establishment of a Soviet order, through the regime of people's democracy, on the condition that that regime was consolidated and developed, and by leaning on the U.S.S.R. and the other new democracies.

C) Embodying the rule of the working people under the leadership of the working class, the people's democracy, in the existing historical situation, as is already proved by experience, can and must successfully perform the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat for the liquidation of the capitalist elements and the organisation of a socialist economy. It can crush the resistance of the overthrown capitalists and landowners, their attempts to restore the rule of capital, and organise the building of industry on the basis of public ownership and planned economy. The regime of the people's democracy will succeed in overcoming the vacillations of the urban petty-bourgeoisie and middle class peasantry, in neutralising the capitalist elements in the villages and in rallying all the working people around the working class for the onward march toward socialism.

The regime of the people's democracy will not change its character during the carrying out of this policy which aims at eliminating the capitalist elements from the national economy. The key positions of the working class in all spheres of public life must continuously be strengthened and all village elements rallied who might become allies of the workers during the period of sharp struggles against the kulaks and their hangers-on. The people's democratic regime must be strengthened and improved in order to render powerless and liquidate the class enemies.

D) The new democracies, including Bulgaria, are already marching toward socialism in ceaseless struggle against all domestic and especially foreign enemies. They are now creating the conditions necessary for the building of socialism, the economic and cultural basis for a future socialist society.

This is the central task today facing the new democracies and, conse-



quently, the working class and its vanguard, the Communist Party.

This task embraces the following important aspects:

- a) Consolidation of the key positions held by the working class, headed by the Communist Party, in all spheres of political, economic and cultural life.
- b) Strengthening the alliance between the working class and the working peasants under the leadership of the working class.
- c) Speeding up the development of the public sector of national economy and, in particular, of heavy industry.
- d) Creating the conditions for liquidating the capitalist elements in village economy by a consistent policy aiming at their isolation and subsequent annihilation.
- e) All-round development of producers' co-operatives among the peasants, giving state assistance to the poor and middle peasants through machine and tractor stations, agricultural machines, credit, seed loans etc., intensifying their interest in the alliance with the working class, persuading them by the example of the co-operative farms of the advantages of that system, and re-educating them in a spirit of intolerance toward capitalist elements.

So far as the nationalisation of the land is concerned, we consider that in our situation and with the development of the co-operative farms, this question has no practical importance, i.e. we think that the nationalisation of the land is not a necessary condition for the development and mechanisation of our rural economy.

E) The people's democracy stands for internationalism. Nationalism is incompatible with the people's democracy. Our Party sees in internationalism, i.e. international collaboration under Comrade Stalin, a guarantee of our country's independent existence, prosperity and progress towards socialism. We think that nationalism, under no matter what guise, is an enemy of communism. This was clearly demonstrated by the anti-communist actions of Tito's group in Yugoslavia. Hence the fight against nationalism is a primary duty of Communists.

Fighting all manifestations of nationalism, we must re-educate the work-

ing people in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and devotion to their country, i.e. in a spirit of genuine patriotism.

Education in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and devotion to one's country means, above all, to make people fully conscious of the unique importance of a firm united front of the new democracies and the U.S.S.R. in the struggle against the aggressive forces of international reaction and imperialism. The entire future of our people depends, on the one hand, on the power of the Soviet Union, and, on the other, on their readiness and ability, in case of capitalist aggression, honourably to fulfil their duty in the common fight.

At the same time, education in the spirit of proletarian internationalism means to render people fully aware of the importance of complete co-ordination of the activities of the Communist Parties, and of the leading role of the Bolshevik Party. For there exists for the Communist Parties one and only one theory as a guide to action—the theory of Marxism-Leninism; one and only one aim in their policy; and there exists the great Party of Lenin and Stalin, as the leading Party of the international labour movement.

It is essential that we educate in this spirit the Party, the working class, the working peasantry and intelligentsia.

#### IV. THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

Two basic facts characterize the present epoch: 1) the general crisis and disintegration of the capitalist system, and 2) the continuous growth and flourishing of socialism in the U.S.S.R.

The general crisis of capitalism is the logical consequence of its own development. By developing the productive capacities of society to an unprecedented extent, capitalism became entangled in contradictions which it cannot solve. World War I ushered in the period of the general crisis of capitalism. The October Revolution in Russia wrested from the system of world capitalism one-sixth of the globe. Capitalism ceased to be the sole and universal system of world economy; it lost its former resilience.

World War II, which was prepared by all the forces of international reaction and precipitated by the fascist aggressors, deepened and



sharpened the general crisis of capitalism. As during the first war, the net result was a considerable weakening of capitalism.

The destruction of the main centres of fascism and world aggression deprived international reaction of its bridge-heads—Germany, Italy and Japan—in the struggle against the U.S.S.R. and socialism, against the working class and the national liberation movement.

The international authority and power of the Soviet Union increased tremendously. By its heroic struggle it not only defended its own freedom and independence but also liberated the European peoples from the foreign yoke. The U.S.S.R. played a decisive role in winning the war against the aggressors and saved civilisation from the fascist brigands. It showed to the whole world that the forces of socialism and democracy are invincible. The U.S.S.R. became a decisive factor in international politics. It is a pillar of peace and of the security of the nations, of their free development towards progress and genuine democracy. The U.S.S.R. is an unsurmountable barrier to the realisation of the dark schemes of international reaction to hurl the peoples into a new holocaust.

Just as World War I ended with Russia's dropping out of the world capitalist system, so World War II and the defeat of fascism led to the breaking away from the imperialist system of a series of Eastern and South-Eastern European states. Liberated by the Soviet Army, these states were thereby enabled to determine their own destinies through the free choice of their peoples, based on the selfless aid of the Soviet Union.

The crisis of the colonial system, aggravated by World War II, led to a powerful upsurge of the national liberation movement in the colonial and dependent countries and threatened the rear of the imperialist system. The colonial peoples are no longer willing to live in the old way, and they have risen in decisive struggle for the establishment of independent states.

Throughout the whole capitalist world the war brought about an unprecedented pauperisation of the masses, an increase of unemployment, misery and hunger and a sharpening of class contradictions, since the bourgeoisie is striving everywhere to shift the main burden of the war and of the post-war difficulties onto the backs of the working people. At the same time the war was followed by a great upsurge of the international labour movement.

After the destruction of the fascist aggressors, the centre of world reaction shifted to the United States. Hitler's plans to enslave the world, which suffered a fiasco in the last war, were superseded by the plans of the American imperialists for world domination. These adventurist plans for the economic, political and ideological enslavement of Europe and of the whole world are directed against the vital national interests of the overwhelming majority of nations and peoples. They are prompted by the greedy imperialist appetites of a financial oligarchy and by its fear of the growth of socialism and people's democracy.

Under the flag of so-called "Western democracy" American imperialism is trying to impose on the European nations its regime based on the almighty dollar and the domination of a handful of monopolists. Its aim is to turn the United Nations into a tool of its own expansionist policy by violating the principle of sovereignty and equality of the member-nations of this organisation. American imperialism is striving to enslave small and temporarily weakened peoples and to build up an imperialist bloc against the U.S.S.R., the new democracies and the revolutionary movements of the workers and the colonial people fighting for their freedom. It is pursuing a policy of reckless increase of armaments. The Anglo-American imperialists are brazenly interfering in the internal affairs of other states and are everywhere supporting the reactionary and openly fascist elements which have been rejected by the people.

But the Anglo-American bloc, established after World War II with Britain playing second fiddle, can hardly be lasting and stable. The contradictions between the two main states of world imperialism today—the U.S.A. and Britain—as well as between other capitalist nations, are bound to grow more acute in the struggle for markets and spheres of influence.

Today's main difference between the democratic camp and the reactionary camp in the world arena, between the warmongers and the partisans of a lasting democratic peace, is the attitude toward the U.S.S.R.

The U.S.S.R. is resolutely resisting all the attacks of the imperialists and all their attempts to scare people with atom bombs. Pursuing a well-tried policy of peace and friendly collaboration among peoples, the U.S.S.R. is backed by its own growing economic and political power, its invincible Soviet Army, the unconditional support of the working class



and working people throughout the whole world, who have an abiding interest in the preservation of peace. The plans of the aggressors and instigators of a new war are doomed to failure.

Exposing the instigators of a new world war, Comrade Stalin recently stated what may be the outcome of their adventurous policy. Here is how he put it:

“It can end only with the disgraceful collapse of the instigators of a new war. Churchill, the chief instigator of a new war, has already succeeded in depriving himself of the confidence of his nation and the democratic forces of the whole world. The same fate awaits all other instigators of war. The horrors of the recent war are too alive in the minds of the people and the social forces in favour of peace are too great for Churchill's pupils in aggression to be able to overpower and deflect them towards a new war.”

The time has passed when the peoples were blind and helpless tools in the hands of ruling capitalist cliques. The peace-loving peoples of both hemispheres are increasingly mobilising themselves in defence of peace, democracy and world culture; the anti-imperialist world front, headed by the great Soviet Union, whose forces are growing continuously, is taking ever clearer shape. Now, when the imperialist cliques are impudent enough to brandish the atom bomb, all peoples see in the Soviet Union the main guardian of world peace and defender of civilisation from capitalist barbarity. The peace-loving peoples learned a good lesson from the duel between the forces of war and peace which was held in the just concluded United Nations General Assembly. Rejecting the Soviet proposals for banning atomic weapons and for an immediate reduction of armaments by the five Great Powers, the Anglo-American imperialists were exposed before the eyes of the entire world as the enemies of peace and international collaboration.

Not only the peoples of the Soviet Union and the people's democracies are ranging themselves in the peace front, but also the overwhelming majority of the peoples in the capitalist countries and colonies. The defeat of the reactionary and militarist Republican Party in the recent U.S. elections showed conclusively that the majority of the American people do not want war and reject the reactionary programme of the big capitalist trusts. Every sober observer may well ask himself what British minis-

ter could beguile the British peoples into an anti-Soviet war, when they remember that it was the Soviet Army which saved them from the horrible Nazi menace. The struggle of the broad masses against the incendiaries of a new war has assumed especially acute forms in France and Italy. Increasingly losing hope that they can use the peoples of the bourgeois-democrat nations as cannon fodder against the Soviet Union, the war-minded imperialists are pinning their hopes on their West-German zones of occupation and on fascist Spain, which they wish to use as a base and weapon in their aggressive policy in Europe.

After the war the anti-imperialist camp has extended far to the east and on its side are now fighting for their independence the peoples of Indonesia, Vietnam, Burma and other colonial states. The Korean people, enjoying the selfless support of the U.S.S.R., carried off a brilliant victory over reaction and the lackeys of imperialism by proclaiming their independent people's republic, which the Bulgarian government recognized and greeted warmly.

Of exceptional importance for the correlation of forces between the two world camps is the long, stubborn and heroic struggle which the Chinese people are waging for their independence against the imperialists and their corrupt reactionary agents in China. At this very moment the million-strong national liberation army of China which under the firm leadership of the Chinese Communist Party has won a series of spectacular victories over the mercenaries of Chinese reaction, despite the aid and arms given by the American imperialists, has already freed the whole of Manchuria, practically the whole of North China, almost all Inner Mongolia, and is now advancing headlong toward the capital of Chiang Kai Shek—Nanking. The forces of democracy amongst the Chinese people, five hundred million strong, have already won the upper hand over the forces of reaction, and their final victory is only a question of time.

The anti-imperialist front is thus continuously growing and consolidating. Today it already constitutes an unshakable force. The masses of the people and the anti-imperialist forces in all lands, in the front ranks of which are to be found the Communist Parties, will know how to paralyse the war-like machinations of aggressive imperialism and will thus ensure lasting peace to the world.



The basic lines of our foreign policy, the foreign policy of the Fatherland Front were already outlined in the 1942 programme; safeguarding the national interests of the Bulgarian people in close friendship with the U.S.S.R. and understanding with neighbouring states.

True to these principles, the Fatherland Front government from its very inception passed over to the side of the Allies and led the Bulgarian armies against the Nazi hordes; it withdrew its armies from the Greek and Yugoslav regions which had been occupied by them and entered into an understanding with the Soviet command for the speedier liberation of the Balkans from Nazi occupation.

We know today and can assess the great political and moral importance of the fact that Bulgaria participated, under Soviet command, in the liberation war for the defeat of Nazi Germany.

We experienced once again the powerful and irreplaceable aid of the U.S.S.R. when at the Paris Peace Conference the authoritative voice of Comrade Molotov was heard declaring that the Bulgarian people could rest assured about their frontiers, for not one yard would be taken away by anyone.

Ever since the Soviet Government, intent on preventing Bulgaria becoming involved in the war on the side of Germany, proposed to the Filov government a pact of friendship and mutual aid between the U.S.S.R. and Bulgaria, the Bulgarian people have felt the presence of the powerful, friendly hand of the U.S.S.R. They remember the Soviet Government's warning when the criminal monarcho-fascist clique concluded an alliance with Germany and allowed the Nazi hordes to step onto Bulgarian soil. They gratefully recall Stalin's heartening words at various times during the most crucial days of the war, namely, to persevere in their struggle against the monarcho-fascist dictatorship which was bound to end in victory. On September 5, 1944, when the provocations of the German agents had overtaxed the patience of the Soviet Government, the latter declared war on Bulgaria. Today we can fully appreciate the decisive importance of this act for the destiny of Bulgaria. In this "war" not one single Soviet or Bulgarian soldier was killed. But the entry of the Soviet Army helped overthrow the fascist dictatorship and ensure the future of the Bulgarian people, their freedom and national independence. We shall

never forget that even while the war was still on the Soviet Government started to provide Bulgaria with basic necessities for our economy, helped to feed our people during the droughts and continues to lend us valuable political, economic, moral and technical assistance on an ever-increasing scale.

Our Party, intimately connected with the Russian revolutionary movement from before the October revolution, has the historic merit of rendering still deeper the gratitude of the Bulgarian people towards their liberators and of transforming friendship with the U.S.S.R. into the cornerstone of the foreign policy of our People's Republic. Today our friendship is also formally imbedded in the pact of friendship, collaboration and mutual aid between the two nations.

Leaning securely on Soviet friendship, our free and independent people's republic was recognized by all nations, concluded the best possible peace treaty under the existing circumstances, and established normal diplomatic relations with practically all countries. Now it is fighting for its right to admission in the United Nations and thus to remove the last international consequences of Bulgaria's former status as a satellite of Nazi Germany.

The friendship between our republic and the other new democracies is another very important aspect of our foreign policy. Its beginning dates from the struggle of our peoples, aided by the U.S.S.R., for the achievement and consolidation of their freedom and independence. We highly value the assistance which the governments of fraternal Poland and Czechoslovakia lent us during the Peace Conference in Paris and also during the just concluded United Nations General Assembly, where Bulgaria was subjected to unwarranted accusations and unjust attacks. Our friendly relations with these two countries as well as with the People's Republics of Rumania, Hungary and Albania, which were sealed by pacts of friendship, mutual aid and collaboration, are growing ever firmer and open up broad perspectives for close co-operation between our peoples, for ensuring their future along the path of democracy and socialism.

Fraternal Yugoslavia, with whom the closest brotherly relations and a common and age-old ideal united us—the establishment of a South Slav Federation—is, unfortunately, ruled today by men—Tito and his group—



who have betrayed the great doctrine of Marxism-Leninism, the pre-condition for mutual confidence between the Communist Parties and the basis for their co-operation on the road to socialism. The nationalist policy of the Tito group is increasingly alienating Yugoslavia from the U.S.S.R. and the new democracies, and subjects it more and more to the danger of falling into the clutches of greedy imperialism. Our party watches with anxiety the degeneration of the present Yugoslav Communist Party leaders into an ordinary bourgeois-chauvinist clique, hostile to communism. But we do not doubt the loyalty of the Yugoslav Communist Party to internationalism and Marxism-Leninism and its ability to bring fraternal Yugoslavia back into the fold of the U.S.S.R. and people's democracies.

The friendship of our Party and the Greek Communist Party weathered the storm of World War II. During the hardest period of German-Bulgarian occupation, our Party was on the side of the Greek national liberation movement and helped it as best we could. During the voluntary evacuation of Western Thrace, the Bulgarian soldiers left behind all reserves of food for the hungry local population. Our party and our people are deeply shocked by the sufferings to which the heroic Greek people, who were the first in the Balkans to fight the Italo-German aggressors, have been subjected by a monarcho-reactionary clique supported by military aid from foreign powers. We follow with profound sympathy the epic struggle of the Greek people against the foreign occupationists and their local quislings. The Greek Communist Party, the democratic army and the entire Greek people may consider our party and the Bulgarian people their true friends. We staunchly believe in the final victory of people's democracy in Greece, which alone will ensure freedom and independence to the Greek people and will create, on the Greek side, the necessary conditions for sincere friendship and collaboration with us and Greece's other northern neighbours.

The imperialists and war incendiaries resort to any means in their attempt to obstruct the development of our republic. They made many efforts to aid and abet the defeated forces of reaction in Bulgaria. Day in and day out the "Voice of America" radio-station slanders and insults our republic and its government leaders and openly calls for crimes against the people's authorities.

The leaders of Lulchev's bankrupt Social-Democratic Party recently exposed before the court and before the whole world the backstage schemes of certain foreign diplomats. But even after this fiasco of the plotters, our republic continues to be the object of vicious slanders and attacks. Just when our people are mobilising all their material resources and their labour for the fulfilment of the forthcoming Five-Year-Plan, when they are focusing their entire attention on the tasks of our economic and cultural construction, the war incendiaries, as though at a given signal, are impudently accusing our peaceful little republic of "militarism" and "aggressive designs" with respect to our neighbours.

The very opposite is the truth. And this indubitable truth every honest and unbiased observer sees and knows. Our republic needs lasting peace, friendship and collaboration with other peoples, in order to catch up with the other more advanced nations and to become an economically advanced, civilised, democratic and socialist state. That is the goal of its foreign policy. But our Party knows that this can be achieved only if our nation is free, independent and enjoys equal rights. That is why, at the head of the Fatherland Front, it is fighting against foreign interference, watching over the freedom and independence of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and working for ever closer collaboration with our allies, with the peace and freedom loving peoples.

Working diligently for that aim our people are ready to rise as one man to nip in the bud all provocations and attempts on the territorial integrity and the frontiers of the Bulgarian People's Republic.

## V. THE SOUTHERN SLAV FEDERATION AND THE MACEDONIAN QUESTION

The treachery of Tito's group towards the U.S.S.R. and the united democratic anti-imperialist camp, its anti-Marxist and nationalist alignment, condemned by the Communist Information Bureau, by all Communist Parties and all genuine democratic organisations, found expression in its attitude toward the federation of the Southern Slavs and the Macedonian question.



With the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship in Bulgaria on September 9, 1944, and the establishment in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia of a people's democratic regime under the leaders of the Communist Parties, very favourable conditions were created for a rational and democratic settlement of the Macedonian question.

Under the newly created domestic and international conditions, the vital interests of the Bulgarian and Yugoslav peoples demanded that both nations seek the closest rapprochement which would quickly lead to their economic and political unification—to the establishment of a federation of Southern Slavs. Such a federation, firmly based on friendship with the U.S.S.R. and fraternal collaboration with the other new democracies, could have successfully defended the freedom and independence of its peoples and ensured their proper development toward socialism. Within the framework of such a federation there would have been successfully solved all the old unsolved problems left over by the bourgeois-monarchic regimes concerning the unification of the Macedonians from the Pirin district with the People's Republic of Macedonia, as well as the return to Bulgaria of the purely Bulgarian Western Border Region which the Yugoslavia of King Alexander had grabbed after World War I.

Our Party firmly chose this course, relying on the word of the Yugoslav Communists to whom we were tied by common work and association covering a period of many years. And that is the present stand of our Party. But the nationalist leaders of Yugoslavia left this only correct path. After the two governments had agreed on a series of measures relating to the forthcoming establishment of the federation, the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party informed our Party in March 1948 that it had changed its mind, that we should not be in too much of a hurry about the federation, and refused to discuss the matter any further. At the same time, the Yugoslav leaders set as the central task the transformation of the Pirin district into an autonomous region with a view to its inclusion in Yugoslavia, independently of the existing understanding on the creation of a federation.

Evidently this about turn of Tito and his group was intimately tied up with their betrayal of Marxism-Leninism. This group is skidding down the slippery road of nationalism and today takes the same stand as the

Greater Serbian chauvinists used to do when they were striving for hegemony in the Balkans and for annexing Macedonia to Serbia and Yugoslavia.

The disclosures made at the Albanian Communist Congress about the aggressive intentions of the Tito group towards Albania are another proof of its double-faced policy, its crass nationalism and departure from the united socialist front of the Soviet Union and the people's democracies.

There were in the past two alternatives for the solution of the Macedonian question, which for decades on end was at the centre of Balkan rivalries and wars.

1) A democratic revolution for Macedonia's liberation from the Turkish yoke. This road was chosen by the internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO)—Gotse Delchev, Sandansky and others—as well as by the Macedonian revolutionary Social-Democrat Union—Hadji Dimov, Nicola Larez and others. These Macedonian organisations enjoyed the full support of our Party, many of whose members were active fighters in the Macedonian revolutionary movement.

2) The bourgeois nationalist road, i.e. the liberation of Macedonia from the Turkish yoke through a war, and its annexation by one or several Balkan states. Our Party has always firmly opposed military-bourgeois nationalism and has fought steadfastly against the plans of the Balkan monarchies and the bourgeois-capitalist cliques to enslave and carve up Macedonia.

The second alternative prevailed, however, leading to the two Balkan wars (1912-13). Macedonia was freed from the Turkish yoke, but carved up between Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria.

In the face of the growing danger of imperialist aggression on the Balkans, the Balkan socialist parties raised the slogan of a Balkan democratic federation. United in a mighty federation, the Balkan peoples could have more easily defended their freedom and independence against any aggressive moves by the imperialist forces. At the same time, the federation would have helped to solve all the outstanding national issues in the Balkans, including that of Macedonia. Within a Balkan democratic federation Macedonia, split into three parts, could have united as a state with equal rights.



Our Party correctly linked the solution of the Macedonian question with the creation of a Balkan democratic federation. That is why it has waged a long, consistent and uncompromising fight against Greater Bulgarian chauvinism. It stuck to that position during the Balkan wars and World War I.

What was the essence of the Greater Bulgarian chauvinism of the Bulgarian monarchist and capitalist bourgeoisie?

It consisted, first, of an attempt to gain hegemony in the Balkans and, second, of an attempt forcefully to incorporate Macedonia into the Bulgarian state. This policy, which was carried out during World War II under the overlordship of Nazi Germany, was in fact a treacherous policy, concealing the attempts of Nazi Germany to turn so-called "Greater Bulgaria" into a German colony.

After the October Socialist Revolution and the accession of the Balkan socialist parties to the Communist International, the Balkan Socialist Federation became a Balkan Communist Federation, in which our party played a very active role. The Balkan Communist Federation saw the solution of all Balkan problems, including that of Macedonia, in the creation of a Balkan democratic federation, capable of defending the freedom and independence of all Balkan peoples.

Our Party thus took up a correct and time-honoured stand on the Balkan question in general and also offered a truly democratic solution of the Macedonian question. The slogan for a Balkan federative republic was in complete conformity with Marxist-Leninist teachings on the national problem.

"The class conscious workers in the Balkan countries," wrote Lenin in 1912, "were the first to raise the slogan for a consistently democratic solution of the national problem in the Balkans. It was the slogan of a federative Balkan Republic. As a result of the weakness of the democratic classes in the present Balkan states (where the proletariat is numerically small and the peasantry backward, illiterate and disunited) the economically and politically necessary union became an alliance of Balkan monarchs."

Prior to World War II there had grown up a powerful progressive Macedonian movement in Bulgaria, which advocated the self-determina-

tion of the Macedonian people, as a free nation. It was fully supported by our Party which, during the war, worked in full agreement with the Macedonian Communists. Bulgarian partisans fought shoulder to shoulder with Macedonian partisans against the German-Bulgarian occupation forces. Our Party warmly welcomed the establishment of a Macedonian People's Republic, within the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia.

Everyone knows that our Party made great sacrifices in the struggle for the defence of the Macedonian people's right to self-determination, and against the aggressive policy of the Bulgarian bourgeoisie.

After the Bled Agreement, and in order to help forward the process of the drawing together and future unification of the Macedonian regions in both countries, our Party sanctioned the introduction of the official Macedonian language as a compulsory subject in all schools in the Pirin district, and admitted many Macedonian teachers from Skopie as instructors, as well as Macedonian librarians to circulate Macedonian books. This was a proof that our Party felt the greatest sympathy for the Macedonian people's unification.

But the Belgrade and Skopie leaders double-crossed us despite our Party's good intentions. Most of the teachers and librarians sent from Skopie, evidently acting on instructions from their Yugoslav leaders, became agents of Greater Yugoslav, anti-Bulgarian chauvinist propaganda; and later, after the treachery of Tito's group towards the U.S.S.R. and the united anti-imperialist camp, they came out as open anti-Soviet agents.

What Kulishevsky's agents did in the Pirin district was only a reflection of what happened inside the People's Republic of Macedonia. Under the pretext of a struggle against Greater Bulgarian chauvinism and with the aid of the state apparatus and all other public organisations—political and cultural—a systematic campaign was waged against everything Bulgarian, against the Bulgarian people, their culture, their people's democracy, their Fatherland Front and especially against our Party. No Bulgarian books or newspapers, not even *Rabotnichesko Delo*, were allowed to enter the People's Republic of Macedonia. All Bulgarian inscriptions on old school buildings and other monuments were carefully erased. Family names, as for instance Kulishev, Uzunov, Tsvetkov and others, became,



as we know, Kulishevsky, Uzunovsky, Tsvetkovsky, so that they should have nothing in common with Bulgarian names.

Public officials in the Macedonian People's Republic had the effrontery to make declarations directed against the Bulgarian people and against Bulgaria. In his well-known speech, delivered on March 23, 1948 before the 2nd Congress of the Macedonian People's Front, Kulishevsky slanderously accused our country and our people's authority of oppressing the Macedonian population in the Pirin district.

Kulishevsky's provocative speech was eagerly reproduced by the newspapers, news agencies and radio of the Anglo-American imperialists in order to launch a scurrilous campaign against the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the unification of the Macedonian people.

The main point in the attacks against the people's democracies made last July at the 5th Congress of the Yugoslav Communist Party in Belgrade was directed against our nation. In their speeches Tito, Djilas, Tempo, Kulishevsky and Vlahov spat their chauvinist venom at Bulgaria and at our Party, whose fault, it seems, is its refusal to let them grab the Pirin district and its condemnation of their treason. General Tempo went even so far in his chauvinist self-deceit as to jeer at the anti-fascist struggle of the Bulgarian people and their partisan movement, although everyone knows that our partisans fought together with the Yugoslav partisans and that our army played an active part under Marshal Tolbukhin in the war for the final liberation of Yugoslavia.

Towards the end of September 1948 the Prime Minister of the Serbian People's Republic, Peter Stambolich, dared publicly to slander our country in the Belgrade Skupstina, alleging that responsible Bulgarian politicians were spreading propaganda against Yugoslavia's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

It is clear that such slanders can have only one aim: to antagonize the Yugoslav peoples against the Bulgarian people, to create a gulf between the two fraternal peoples and to furnish imperialist propaganda with a weapon with which to heap new lies and slanders on Bulgaria.

Late in November 1948 a trial was held in Skopie of Bulgarian fascists, police agents and other war criminals who had committed atrocities during the occupation of Macedonia. This trial, however, was turned into a

vicious chauvinist campaign against the Bulgarian people and against our country. The prosecutor, the judges and the accused fascist criminals themselves, according to a pre-arranged understanding, with touching unanimity cast aspersions on the Bulgarian people.

The nationalist and chauvinist policy of the Titos and Kulishevskys, which is the other side of the coin of their anti-Soviet alignment, is not only directed against Bulgaria and the Bulgarian people but also against the Macedonian people. This policy has borrowed the methods of the Bulgarian and Serbian nationalists and is sowing hatred among the Macedonian people, inciting one part against the other, resorting to terror and persecution against those who disapprove of the official course of the present Yugoslav leaders. In this way the realisation of the age-old dream of the Macedonian people—their national unification—is being artificially delayed.

The people of the Pirin district, however, refuse to fall for this vicious anti-Bulgarian and disruptive propaganda. They are opposed to the inclusion of their land in Yugoslavia before the realisation of a federation between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, because from time immemorial they have considered themselves economically, politically and culturally tied to the Bulgarian people and do not wish to cut loose. Besides, there are still alive among these people the traditions of the Macedonian revolutionary movement and, in particular, of its Seres wing, headed by Sandansky, which has always advocated federation as the only correct solution of the Macedonian question.

We know very well that the nationalist and chauvinist policy of Belgrade and Skopie leaders of the Tito and Kulishevsky type do not have the approval of the majority of the Macedonian people who are convinced that their national unification will be built on an understanding between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, in co-operation with these peoples and with the powerful assistance of the U.S.S.R.

Our Party has always said and continues to say that Macedonia should belong to the Macedonians. True to the traditions of the Macedonian revolutionaries, together with all honest Macedonian patriots, we are deeply convinced that the Macedonian people will translate their national unity into reality and will ensure their future as a free nation with equal



rights only within the framework of a federation of Southern Slavs.

In the past, the unification of the Southern Slavs has always met with the stubborn resistance of German imperialism. Today the new pretenders for world domination— the American and British imperialists— oppose the unification and merging of the Southern Slavs. They have found worthy allies in the present Yugoslav leaders.

Assured of the support of the U.S.S.R., of the new democracies and of the world forces of democracy, the Southern Slavs will be able to smash the opposition of the imperialists and realise their vitally necessary unity. The main obstacle to the federation of the Southern Slavs is today the nationalist leadership in Belgrade and Skopie, the Titos, Djilases, Kulish-evskys, Vlahovs, traitors to Marxism-Leninism. But history is marching on and will sweep aside everything which stands in the way of progress. The cause of the unification of the Southern Slavs, including the Macedonian people, will triumph.

## VI. ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL PROSPECTS AND TASKS

In the economic field the people's government was faced with the immediate task of repairing the damage caused by the war and German plunder and of clearing the way for our country's further economic development towards socialism.

In industry the task of reconstruction was successfully solved in the course of the Two-Year Plan. In 1948 industrial output exceeded pre-war by 75 per cent. Its development was given a strong impetus by nationalisation, which enabled it to proceed towards socialist reconstruction, towards the merging of industrial enterprises and the centralisation of production by combining it according to branches and concentrating it in the most productive units.

In agriculture, the process of rehabilitation is not yet completed, mainly due to the three post-war droughts. Certain branches of livestock breeding and crop-raising are lagging behind. But here, too, together with efforts to reach and surpass the pre-war level in all branches, socialist reconstruction has been started through the creation of large-scale co-operative and state farms. The co-operative farms, more than 1,000 in number

and covering some 300,000 hectares of arable land, have become a firmly established new form of rural economy, which alone is capable, with the aid of the machine and tractor stations, of improving the well-being of the peasants, of mechanising and modernising our agriculture, and of directing it towards socialism.

The middle peasants have recently begun to adopt a favourable attitude towards the co-operative farms, whose number is increasing continuously. Strictly observing the principle of voluntary membership, the present task is to consolidate, strengthen and multiply the already existing farms and turn them into models for the extension of co-operative farming.

The national income for 1948 already exceeds pre-war by 10 per cent, thanks mainly to the successful nationalisation of industry. Moreover, the national income is distributed in a much fairer way today, as a result of the expropriation from the bourgeoisie of industrial enterprises, banks and wholesale trade and of the liquidation of the large estates together with the large urban real estate lots, which did away with the big incomes of the exploiters.

However, our task is not merely to rebuild that which already existed in our national economy. We must rapidly proceed with the further development of our country's productive forces for the early elimination of its economic backwardness and its transformation into a highly developed industrial-agricultural country. The task is now, I repeat, through industrialisation and electrification and by mechanising rural economy, to achieve in 15 or 20 years that which other countries under different conditions achieved in the course of a whole century. For this purpose it is necessary to create a powerful electrical base by exploiting the country's water and fuel resources, rapidly to develop mining, to build up our own iron and steel industry and a sufficiently developed machine-building industry and other heavy industries, as well as to develop, modernise and amalgamate our light industry. It is also necessary to strengthen our rural economy by putting large agricultural machines, primarily tractors, at its disposal and to increase the yield of the soil through agro-technical improvements, irrigation, electrification, and a wide use of artificial fertilisers.

Our industrial policy should be: systematic reduction in costs, cheapening of output and lowering of prices of industrial goods. In Stalin's words,



that is the broad road along which industry must move if it is to go ahead and grow stronger, to lead agriculture in its wake and to speed up the laying of the foundations of our socialist economy.

Nationalised industry, developing in accordance with the laws of expanded socialist reproduction, i.e. yearly increasing its output and establishing new enterprises, will present ever larger demands for food and agricultural raw materials. The growing needs of industry, of the urban population and of the army cannot be satisfied by private and small rural economy, which has a low productivity. This raises the problem of the socialist reconstruction of rural economy simultaneously with the socialist reconstruction and development of industry. You cannot for long base the people's democratic rule and socialist construction on two different principles—large scale, amalgamated socialist industry and scattered, backward small commodity production. Rural economy must be transferred gradually, systematically and steadfastly to a new technical basis, that of large-scale production through the amalgamation of individual farms into big, mechanised co-operative farms. That is why the Five-Year Plan provides for 60 per cent collectivisation in the countryside within the next five years. Bearing in mind the recent progress of the co-operative farms, this task is quite feasible.

In building socialism our people must rely mainly on their own strength, using our own resources with the greatest economy of means and materials. A regime of strict economy must be the permanent and daily aim of every economic and state leader, of every worker and peasant in our People's Republic and, before all, of every Communist. Our people are happy that they can also count on the disinterested brotherly aid of the great country of socialism—the Soviet Union—and on planned co-operation with the other people's democracies, which will save us much labour and effort and will hasten our development.

Like good farmers, we do not eat up everything we produce but save part of the national revenue for the further development of our national economy—for the construction of new factories and plants, new machine and tractor stations, for a new upsurge of the productive forces in industry and agriculture.

We shall thus be able to satisfy the growing needs of both town and



countryside and ensure the gradual and continuous improvement of the standard of living, as well as guaranteeing our country's rapid economic development which is the guarantee of the future well-being of our working people and of our children.

We are glad to say that in spite of difficulties which are not yet quite overcome, the food supply of our people, with increased rations, is completely ensured until next harvest. The bulk of the working peasants have carried out their obligations to the state and the people honestly and readily. Only an insignificant minority, mainly from among the kulaks and the former reactionary opposition, some of whom infiltrated into the Fatherland Front, tried to sabotage and to speculate with the people's bread. This resistance, however, will be broken.

The new system of compulsory delivery of agricultural produce to the state and free sale of surpluses which the government adopted and which will be perfected on the basis of our experience, distributes the obligations more equitably among the peasant producers in accordance with the size of their property and their possibilities and stimulates them to cultivate their soil more diligently and get a higher yield. By selling part of their produce to the state at fixed prices the peasants receive, again at fixed prices, an ever-increasing quantity of the industrial goods they need.

The new state price policy aims at establishing a relatively stable and just ratio between the prices of different commodities. Thus every producer will know what he can get in exchange for his produce today, tomorrow and the next day. We must avoid a repetition of the post-World War I situation, when an agricultural boom was followed by a catastrophic drop in prices, entailing the ruin of many farmers. The systematic increase of the productivity of labour in industry and agriculture will gradually lower the prices of industrial and agricultural commodities, and result in a lower cost of living and a stabilization of the Lev.

The supply of basic necessities made a new step forward during the last months. But we are not yet able completely to satisfy all needs. Two or three consecutive good harvests should enable us fully to satisfy the increased needs and the growing consuming power of the working people and to abolish rationing. We must, therefore, exert all efforts for the fulfilment of the sowing plan, for the maximum increase of the yield of the



soil. And until it becomes possible to abolish rationing distribution will have to be carried out not according to the principle of perfect equality, but according to the quantity and importance of the work done. All parasites, loafers and exploiters must be deprived of the possibility of getting goods at ceiling prices. The regular and adequate supply of key workers on whom the fulfilment and overfulfilment of the economic plans depend, must be ensured. "To each according to his work"—that is both just and economically sound. Everyone is able to do more work and better work and hence to earn more.

The successful solution of the basic economic task—the fulfilment of the Five-Year Plan—requires the efforts and enthusiasm of all working people. The trade unions have a very important part to play in this respect. Under their leadership shock-work and socialist emulation must become a general method of work, embracing workers and peasants, men and women, young and old. In Bulgaria work must increasingly become a matter of honour, dignity and heroism. The country must get to know its heroes of labour, its inventors, rationalisers, innovators, the talented and loyal masters of intellectual and physical work who increase the economic and cultural strength of our people and multiply the national wealth. It should honour them as its best and most worthy sons and daughters. In new Bulgaria everyone's place will be determined not by his name or origin, nor by his talk or opinion of himself, but exclusively by his work, by what he contributes to the economic, cultural and political progress of his people.

There can be no other criterion in this respect.

The broad sweep of constructive activity in all branches of our national economy requires the creation of an army of construction workers, engineers and technicians, as well as their proper supply with the latest tools. The entire nation follows with admiration the labour exploits of our shock-brigaders and working youth. Many of our major projects will carry the proud and honourable name "youth construction." Continuing to make the fullest use of the work of brigaders and *trudovaks*, as well as of local brigades, we must at the same time multiply the army of permanent construction workers, masters and enthusiasts of their trade, armed with the achievements of modern construction technique. The profession of construction worker must become one of the most honoured professions in Bulgaria.

We shall get new labour cadres for our growing economy from amongst the peasants who can find no work in agriculture as well as from amongst housewives whose working capacity is wasted by drudgery at home. We cannot become a prosperous nation and improve our living standards as long as a great part of national labour is wasted unproductively and used inadequately for a good part of the year. Many urban and rural workers hitherto employed only part-time will find work in the new constructions and new industrial enterprises. The creation of more nursery schools and creches, of public canteens and laundries, will relieve household work and enable many housewives to seek a more rational and socially useful way of applying their labour and abilities. Through free courses and schools we have already started to train our labour reserves, i.e. qualified industrial and construction workers from among the workers' and peasant youth. This should be continued with even greater energy.

Our country has already set out on the road of socialist development. The major factors for our socialist construction are already in existence: a people's democratic government, the alliance of the proletariat and the peasants under the former's guidance, large-scale industrial production in the hands of a people's democracy, rapid development of the productive forces through new economic construction, co-operatives and especially co-operative farms and artisans' co-operatives, and last but not least, the active fraternal support of the U.S.S.R. and close economic collaboration with the people's democracies, which guarantees and considerably expedites our socialist development.

During the first Five-Year Plan our task will be to lay the foundations of socialism both in industry and in agriculture. The aim of the plan is precisely the solution of this task. Upon these foundations the next two or three five-year plans will see the building of socialism and the creation of socialist society.

Our main tasks in building the economic and cultural foundations of socialism can be formulated as follows:

1. Exertion of all forces and resources for the successful fulfilment of the Five-Year Plan.
2. Complete socialisation of the means of production and exchange, i.e. their transformation into the property of all the working people;

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abolition of all unearned income on the basis of the principle "He who does not work, shall not eat."

§. Unification of the nation's entire economic activity in one general economic plan; a strict regime of economy in materials, means and other resources.

4. Tapping of our national wealth, detection of oil, creation of our own ferrous and non-ferrous metal industry.

5. Increased production of electrical energy, so as to satisfy the needs of industry and agriculture by the building of power stations and increasing the output of coal from existing coalfields and exploitation of new ones; transformation of low-grade coal into electric energy.

6. Running our light industry at full capacity by introducing two and three shifts, rationalisation and reconstruction and liquidating the disproportion between interrelated branches, so as completely to satisfy the needs of the population.

7. Altering the ratio between light and heavy industry in favour of the latter by developing electrical energy, coal and ore output, machine-building, chemical, rubber and other industries, in order to increase the well-being of the people and to reduce the dependence of our national economy on imports from abroad.

8. Maximum production of raw materials for our industry by increasing the sown area of industrial crops, improving livestock breeding and speeding up the exploitation of mineral wealth.

9. Radical reconstruction of rural economy on the basis of co-operative and state farms with high yields and high production in order to ensure the growing needs of the population, industry and export.

10. Solution of our bread problem once and for all on the above basis; ensuring of high harvests through modern machine cultivation of the soil, use of artificial fertilisers, creation of forest belts and irrigation.

11. Development of highly productive livestock and sheep breeding and poultry; increase of the area under fodder crops.

12. Planned afforestation for the improvement of the country's climate and for satisfying the growing needs of timber for construction; efficient exploitation of forests by making full use of their yearly increase; creation of high altitude agriculture (flax, potatoes etc.) and livestock breeding.

13. Development of both sea and Danube fisheries, creation of artificial lakes and dissemination of fish in our river.

14. Introduction of comfortable and rapid means of communication by the extension and electrification of our railway system, creation of a dense network of well-kept roads, development of automobile and air transport.

15. Raising the material and cultural level of the workers, the toiling peasants and intelligentsia; improvement of the supply of basic necessities.

16. Extension and consolidation of state and co-operative trade, creation of an apparatus for the purchase of agricultural surpluses and for a fuller development of trade between town and village.

17. Creation of a new socialist labour discipline through the re-education of the masses, the development of shock-work and socialist emulation by enlisting more and more workers.

The fulfilment of economic tasks is intimately connected with raising the cultural and ideological level of the Bulgarian people. Special attention should be paid to the education of working people of town and countryside and of the intelligentsia in a socialist spirit.

Let us never forget that the struggle on the cultural and ideological front is of first-rate importance for making away with the vile legacy of capitalism, for overcoming bureaucracy, waste and parasitism, for increasing the productivity of labour, for fulfilling the Five-Year Plan and, in general, for the progress of our nation toward socialism.

As a result of this development, our country will in the course of several five-year plans be transformed from a backward agrarian country into a highly developed industrial-agrarian country. This means that alongside of maximum increase of agricultural yields we shall speed up our industrial development, which in turn will immeasurably increase the wealth and prosperity of our nation and ensure its economic independence from imperialism and its defensive capacity.

This development will be along socialist lines. The last vestiges in our economy of the exploiting classes in the towns—the urban bourgeoisie—will be liquidated. Craftsmen will unite in artisans' co-operatives. The village bourgeoisie—the kulaks—will be increasingly rendered harmless and squeezed out of their economic positions as exploiters of the working peasants, while the development of the co-operative farms will create the

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conditions for their complete liquidation. Antagonistic classes will disappear, and society will be composed of workers, working peasants and the working intelligentsia, whose interests will not clash and who with united efforts will bring about our country's advance to socialism and then to communism.

"The indisputable successes of socialism in the U.S.S.R. on the construction front," wrote Comrade Stalin, "have demonstrated that the proletariat can successfully govern the country without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie, that it can successfully build industry without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie, that it can successfully direct the whole of the national economy without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie, that it can successfully build socialism in spite of capitalist encirclement."

Our experience, although still inadequate, clearly shows that the Bulgarian working class has not only the desire but the necessary determination and ability to follow the example of their Soviet brothers.

The socialist development of our country is the prerequisite for the solution of our population problem. During the next five-year plans Bulgaria's population must through increase of births and decrease in child mortality reach the figure of ten millions. Thus our people will conclusively prove themselves a healthy and virile nation, building up their own culture, national in form and socialist in content, and making their contribution to the treasury of human culture.

## VII. THE PARTY AS A DRIVING FORCE AND LEADER

On the eve of September 9, 1944 the Party numbered some 25,000 members, steeled in the long fight against fascism, having undergone the trials of underground activity in conditions of ferocious fascist dictatorship. After September 9, when the Party became a governing party and started to work for the reconstruction of our country on a new basis, thousands of workers, working peasants and intelligentsia gravitated toward it. It became a magnetic centre, attracting the most active, militant and progressive elements in our country, who were eager to contribute their forces to ensuring Bulgaria's development as a people's democracy

towards socialism. Only six months after September 9, at the time of the seventh enlarged plenary session of the C.C. the Party numbered 254,000.

This party growth continued during the ensuing years. At the end of 1946 its membership exceeded 490,000. It had deliberately opened wide its doors to the working people and had admitted new members on a big scale. We did not want to exclude the great number of working people who had awakened for the first time to political life and were gravitating toward the Party as a result of the liberation war and the downfall of the fascist dictatorship. We decided to accept into the Party many workers who, despite their political immaturity, could play a role in the vanguard, intending to train and educate them politically within the Party and with the aid of our pre-September 9 cadres. We therefore established a network of schools and party courses, organised many educational classes, circles, lectures and discussion groups.

The sixteenth plenary session of the Central Committee approved this policy. But at the same time it noted that the ideological and political education of the new members was far from adequate. This did not prove so easy and required a longer time. Hence, the ideological and political level of the Party rank and file still falls far short of what is required to ensure the dominant role of the Party, especially in the provinces. There are quite a few members and even entire primary party organisations, mostly in the villages, which are not yet able to fulfil their role as a vanguard, are lagging behind events, become exponents of retrograde sentiments and not only fail to fight against difficulties but sometimes go so far as to undermine discipline in offices, factories and fields. This was clearly demonstrated during the compulsory delivery of cereals to the state. In some villages there were "Party members" and even Party leaderships who did not head the campaign for ensuring the people's food and even sabotaged the delivery of cereals in practice. The same holds true of certain village Communists who do not help and sometimes hinder the creation of co-operative farms.

All this shows that along with honest and devoted members, who constitute the great majority of the Party rank and file, there are some accidental, demoralised and careerist elements who have infiltrated into the



Party for purely personal and selfish ends. These people create an unhealthy atmosphere, weaken discipline and spread the virus of disintegration. This leads to "sick" organisations, torn by internal squabbles between different groups jockeying for positions.

Such things cannot be tolerated in a Communist Party—the vanguard of the toilers. Drastic and quick measures must be taken to purge the Party of all alien, accidental, demoralised and careerist elements. In May 1948 the Political Bureau of the Central Committee decided to suspend the enrolment of new party members until the end of the current year. The sixteenth plenary session of the Central Committee confirmed this decision in July and decided to propose to the present congress the introduction of candidate membership and measures for the regulation of the Party's social composition. It also decreed the further purging of the Party of accidental elements.

As a result, the Party comes to the present Fifth Congress with 8,053 primary party organisations and 464,000 members. If we add to these the party members in the Army and Labour Corps and the former members of the Social-Democratic Party who entered our Party after the fusion of the two parties, the total amounts to 496,000—i.e. almost half a million.

No village, no factory or major construction job, no city district, no ward is without its primary Communist Party organisation: 500,000 party members in a Bulgaria of seven millions—that is indeed a mighty political army, an invincible force which can move mountains, as the saying goes, on condition that every party member becomes a conscious and educated Communist-Bolshevik, ready to die for the Party, his country and the great cause of communism, capable of being a real leader and organiser of the broad non-party masses.

Under the generally acknowledged political leadership of the Party, there are such mass organisations as the Fatherland Front, numbering approximately 1,000,000 members, the trade unions with 680,000 members, the Bulgarian Women's Union—539,000, the Union of People's Youth—586,000, the Farmers' Union—1,000,000, the co-operatives—over 2,000,000 members, etc. This explains why our country's entire political, economic and cultural life proceeds under the exclusive political leadership of our Party.

As to social composition, the 464,000 party members, about whom detailed information is available, are distributed as follows:

Workers .....	123,000 or 27%
Peasants .....	207,000 or 45%
Employees .....	76,000 or 16%
Craftsmen .....	30,000 or 6%
Free professions, students, house- wives, pensioners and others ..	28,000 or 6%

Among the employees there are many former workers sent in by the Party to consolidate the state apparatus or appointed as heads of nationalised enterprises. One should also mention the Party's great influence on the intelligentsia, which helps to draw them into the active construction of socialism. While the membership figure of 500,000 is quite enough for the Party to play its leading role, the social composition leaves still much to be desired. The percentage of workers in the Party should be increased to at least 30 or 35% mainly from among the industrial and construction workers. At present the workers who are party members can be subdivided as follows:

Industrial workers .....	40%
Artisans .....	16%
Agricultural workers .....	12%
General workers (incl. construc- tion workers) .....	32%

The peasant composition of the Party can be considered as satisfactory: 11% of the peasants who are party members have joined co-operative farms, 57% are poor peasants and 32% middle peasants.

According to age groups, party members can be divided as follows:

Up to 20 .....	less than 1%
20 - 30 .....	25%
30 - 40 .....	39%
40 - 50 .....	25%
50 - 60 .....	8%
Above 60 .....	2%



Work among the youth must be intensified so as to enlist the best and most active of them for the Party.

A classification by education of party members is as follows:

Illiterate . . . . .	7%
Public School education . . . . .	45%
Semi High-School . . . . .	30%
High School . . . . .	6%
Junior College . . . . .	7%
College . . . . .	3%
University . . . . .	2%

The relatively large number (31,000) of illiterate party members who stem mainly from the national minorities (Turks, Gypsies and others) in the Rhodopa and Ludogorie districts and Dobrudja—sets the Party the task of taking immediate measures for the liquidation of illiteracy among its members. We must get rid of the mistaken notion that we have no illiterates, when in the Party, the vanguard of our people, there are 31,000 illiterate members. The considerable number of the partially literate (mainly in the villages) should induce us to publish a political primer and a series of popular pamphlets, printed in large type and written in simple language. The collective reading of newspapers followed by discussion, as well as the diffusion of radio in the villages also assume considerable importance.

The percentage of women in the Party is also unsatisfactory—13%. Women workers constitute only 18% of all women party members as against 44% peasant women, 16% clerks, 19% housewives and 3% students. The poor participation of women, and especially of women workers in the Party is inexcusable in view of the great political and social activity displayed by women and the great part played by women workers in the promotion of shock work and socialist emulation. Evidently our Party organisations underestimate work among women and especially among women workers, and are unable to help them to join the Party and stay in it, taking into account that as well as their regular occupation in factories, offices and mass organisations they have household duties to perform. Too frequent and too long conferences; overburdening of women activ-

ists with work; a petty-bourgeois attitude towards women, which continues to exist even among many party members; a certain inferiority complex among women, a vestige of their age-old subjection; shyness and uncertainty as to their ability to cope with the requirements of Party membership—these are the main obstacles to a larger women membership in the Party. The unsatisfactory participation of women in the Party is a weak link whose strengthening will both increase the number of women party members and improve the social composition of the Party.

The quantitative and qualitative composition of its leading cadres is an index of the strength of the Party and the scope of its work. Whereas even during its peak periods before 1923, the Party never had more than 40,000 members, now there are more than 45,000 members of party committees alone. Of these, 3,558 are former partisans and political prisoners; 676 have been party members for over 20 years, 2,536 from 10 to 20 years, 3,415 from 5 to 10 years, 22,000 from 3 to 5 years and 17,000 less than three years (the latter are mainly in the leadership of the primary party organisations). Hence the complaints, still often heard, that the old party members are being neglected during the election of committees are not quite warranted.

The network of primary party organisations embraces practically all localities of the country and is connected with all categories of our working people. We have 4,900 village territorial primary organisations, 878 town territorial organisations, 854 factory organisations, 811 organisations in institutions and ministries, 209 in co-operative farms, 16 in machine and tractor stations, 13 in state farms, 89 in artisan co-operatives, 120 in transport, 49 in mining, 23 on construction jobs and 91 in schools, or a total of 8,053 primary party organisations. This represents a tremendous achievement for our Party. The primary party organisations, however, have still to be consolidated and to become true leaders and organisers of the masses. The great task now is not so much to increase the number of party organisations as to improve the quality of their work. Increased influence of the Party depends not only on the number of its members, but above all on their quality, their Marxist-Leninist education, their loyalty to the cause of the Party and of socialism, their ability to keep in touch with the masses, to mobilise them and lead them towards



the fulfilment of the national tasks set by the Party and government.

From this point of view the situation within the Party is far from satisfactory. As was stressed by the sixteenth plenary session of the C.C. there are quite a few members in the Party who in reality should at best be candidates for membership. In the life of the party organisations, internal party democracy is not up to standard. Criticism and self-criticism, irrespective of persons, has not yet become the basic motive force of party life from top to bottom. We have not yet completely got rid of methods of ordering people about in party organisations and do not always know how to develop and how to heed the collective consciousness and experience of the Party. The leading organs have not yet organised their work fully on the basis of collective leadership.

What is more, we often forget the shrewd observation of Vladimir Ilych Lenin that two things are of decisive importance for the stability of the Party: selection of people (cadres) and check-up on the fulfilment of decisions. We also do not pay enough attention in our practice to what Comrade Stalin has so often underlined, that "cadres decide everything."

Today there are neither left-wing nor right-wing organised groups or factions. The Party does not and will not tolerate such factions. However, there still exist quite a few right-wing and left-wing tendencies on the part of individual party members. Besides the above mentioned cases, there are also cases when party members give up in the face of hardships, are ready to capitulate before the resistance of the class enemy. Others refuse to submit to any party or state discipline, or fail to recognise the stages of development, fail to understand the people's democracy and the Fatherland Front as a special path of the onward march toward socialism; taking refuge behind loud-mouthed "revolutionary" demagogic phrases, in practice they hinder the development toward socialism.

The correctness of the Party's policy for the liquidation of the capitalist system and the construction of socialism in our country, through uncompromising class struggle against the capitalist elements and through adopting the planning principle in our economy, is not disputed by anyone in our Party. It is generally recognised and firmly carried out in practice.

Unfortunately, however, there still does not exist complete unity of thought and action in our Party from top to bottom. In order to achieve

this we shall still have to work hard. Cases are not rare in which Central Committee decisions are accepted only formally, while in practice they are carried out in a different and distorted way. There still exist "little dictators" in our Party who, banking on their past merits, real or imaginary, exploit their positions and refuse to abide by any laws or decrees and act in an arbitrary way. There are still chatterboxes and inflated egos, people with big and perverse ambitions, who pretend that there is nothing they cannot do, and yet lack the ability or intelligence to work and run things systematically and efficiently, and to finish what they have begun. Such people do not like to learn and are capable of wrecking every useful job.

The Party must fight such unhealthy phenomena by word and by deed, through the education and correction of those who have gone wrong, and even through the removal of incorrigibles. The Party will be purged of the pseudo-communists who have joined through misunderstanding or for selfish careerist ends. We shall work with all our might for the creation of that Bolshevik unity in thought and action from top to bottom which is the basic guarantee of the success of our great cause.

In order continuously and unswervingly to strengthen our Party, we must do the following:

- 1) Purge our party organisations of inimical, careerist and accidental elements who have entered its ranks.

- 2) Make a strict selection among the new members and candidates wishing to enter the Party and regulate its social composition by strict adherence to the rules and by systematically increasing its proletarian composition.

- 3) Develop internal party democracy by overcoming the vestiges of leadership by order. Discuss and decide party problems collectively in the party leaderships and organisations. Entrust every party member with a concrete task and check-up on its fulfilment. Encourage sound criticism and self-criticism in the Party, raise the general activity of the members, tighten party discipline and unity in its organisations.

- 4) Organise systematic Marxist-Leninist collective and individual education of every party member and candidate on a much broader basis. A member who does not want to learn, to educate himself and to make progress is not and cannot be a real member of our Party.



At the end of 1947 certain changes were made in the organisational structure of our Party. On account of the reorganisation of our state apparatus and the abolition of the administrative counties, the party "county committees" had to be dissolved. This was unavoidable, since our Party, as the leading force in the administration of the country cannot have a structure different from that of the state. When the county party leaderships were disbanded, their cadres got jobs in the state apparatus, in the centre or in the localities, or else were switched to the district and municipal organisations of the Party and the Fatherland Front for the purpose of consolidating those organisations.

With the abolition of the county committees the Central Committee was able to contact and supervise the 95 district and 7 municipal party committees more directly. It got a better idea of the true state of affairs in the district committees and could exercise a more direct control over their activities and give them the necessary assistance. On the other hand, the district party leaderships showed greater initiative in their activities and around them there grew up cadres capable of heading party organisations.

But along with the positive features of this re-organisation there were also serious drawbacks. Some anaemic district committees were deprived of the daily aid which they had formerly been getting from the county committees. The C.C. was too far removed from them, while its apparatus was temporarily weakened rather than strengthened. In spite of the measures taken in this respect after the 16th plenary session the C.C. apparatus has not yet been sufficiently consolidated.

What should be done in this respect?

1. It is necessary to intensify the measures for the consolidation of the instructors' apparatus at the C.C. to improve and strengthen the aid it gives to the district committees: the members of the C.C. and other leading comrades should personally visit the district and municipal party organisations more often.

2. The district committees should be strengthened by promoting new comrades from among the party cadres of the primary organisations, in particular from those in industrial enterprises. District secretaries should be retained longer in their positions, and their authority as influential

activists, enjoying local popularity, should be consolidated.

During the past four years, ever since our Party became a ruling party, several changes in personnel had to be made in order to ensure party leadership and improve the work in a series of important cogs of our state apparatus. Thus it was necessary to select and send into the People's Army 3,533 party members, into the Ministry of Internal Affairs 2,000, into the Ministry of Industry 1,101, and into the other ministries 5,576. In other words, over 12,000 party members were selected and sent to work in a leading capacity in the state apparatus. This was no easy job, and its execution entailed the surmounting of many and various difficulties.

One might have expected that the entry of so many Communists into the state and economic apparatus would substantially have helped overcome bureaucracy. Unfortunately, in many cases the very opposite was the case. It is remarkable with what ease some of our comrades, instead of trying to uproot bureaucracy, turn themselves into bureaucrats. The fight against bureaucracy is no easy task. It will require great efforts and perseverance. In order completely to overcome bureaucracy, the people must take an ever greater part in the administration of the state and in public control. In this respect, the committees attached to the various departments of the People's Councils have an important role to play. All this is connected with raising the general cultural and political level of the people. The struggle against bureaucratic distortions and lethargy must never be taken off the agenda. Every manifestation of bureaucracy must be ruthlessly exposed and censured.

Nor must we forget that the brilliant victories of our Party prompt certain comrades and party hacks to smugness and conceit. In order that the Party may develop normally and fulfil its future complex tasks, it must fight with all its power against that great peril, of which our teachers, Lenin and Stalin have time and again warned the Communist Parties.

And thus, during the four years of people's government, since September 9, 1944, our Party has grown and developed into a first rate political party, the decisive, driving and leading force in the construction of a new life in our country along the path of people's democracy and socialism. Through bold Bolshevik criticism and self-criticism, the Party combats its own weaknesses, which are weaknesses mainly of its quick growth and



is consolidating itself more and more as a true Marxist-Leninist party.

Our Party has before it the example of the great Bolshevik Party, whose Central Committee and great leader, Comrade Stalin, have lent us more than once invaluable aid by their advice and guidance. Our party which takes an active part in the Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties, is proud to belong to the great family of world communism, headed by the Bolshevik Party and the leader of progressive mankind—Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin.

The entire experience of the international communist movement confirms the truth that one cannot be a true Marxist without being a true Leninist, and that one cannot be a true Leninist without being a Stalinist.

I conclude the political report of the Central Committee with the party slogan: Under the victorious banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, forward to socialism and communism!

### REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION

After all that has been said so far, I feel that I can limit myself to a short concluding speech.

The discussions have shown the complete unanimity of congress with the political report of the Central Committee as well as with the other reports on the agenda of the congress, with the appraisals made and the inferences drawn, with the general party line on the building of the economic and cultural foundations of socialism in Bulgaria and with the concrete tasks set in all spheres of our political and cultural life. The congress was completely unanimous on the basic problems of party policy. This is undoubtedly one of the most important guarantees for our future success.

The working out of a correct party line and its unanimous approval by the party members is the most important fact and factor. We should not forget, however, Stalin's invaluable advice that good resolutions and declarations on the general line of the Party are only a beginning, that they merely indicate the desire to win, but are not tantamount to victory.

“After the correct line has been laid down,” says Stalin, “after a correct solution of the problem has been found, success depends on how the work is organised; on the organisation of the struggle for the application

of the party line; on the proper selection of personnel; on the way a check is kept on the fulfilment of the decisions of the leading bodies. Otherwise the correct line of the Party and the correct solutions are in danger of being seriously prejudiced. Furthermore, after the correct political line has been laid down, organisational work decides everything, including the fate of the political line, its success or failure."

For the success of the general party line adopted unanimously by our Fifth Congress it is necessary: a) to wage a systematic and steadfast struggle against all difficulties, of which there are quite a few on our road, to surmount them by mobilising the forces of the entire party, of the working class, of all the working people, of the Fatherland Front; b) to organise the ever more active participation of new forces in socialist construction; c) to make a constant and strict selection of cadres, raising the capable ones to positions of leadership in the struggle against hardships, and removing incompetents, those who do not wish or are not capable of growing and developing.

Now that our Party stands at the helm of the state with its members occupying responsible key positions and its authority having soared to unprecedented heights, now that our working people express their readiness to follow our Party and its general line—as was splendidly shown in yesterday's demonstration of the working people of Sofia, the role of our organisations and their leaderships becomes crucial. Our party leaderships now carry the main responsibility for all shortcomings, omissions and mistakes. On our Party and on the work of its cadres will hinge the successful execution of a great task, the fulfilment of the Five-Year Plan, as well as the other important decisions of Congress.

In my report I showed what a mighty force our Party is, what wide social support it enjoys, how firm and close are its ties with existing mass organisations, how deep are its roots in the working class, in the working people. And if in spite of these colossal possibilities which all make for success, we still have many shortcomings, weaknesses and omissions, the fault for this lies within ourselves, especially in our insufficiently concrete practical leadership, in the serious flaws which creep into our organisational work.

We must do away as soon as possible with the lag in our organisational



work so far as the requirements of the political line and the tasks of the Party are concerned. We must raise the level of organisational leadership in all spheres of our activity, especially in our national economy, to that of political leadership, so that our organisational work may ensure the implementation of the political line and the decisions of the Party.

Of decisive importance in this respect, as has already been stressed at congress, are the selection of cadres, check-up on the fulfilment of decisions and the popularisation of criticism and self-criticism within the Party, of internal party democracy.

Our congress demonstrates the undeniable growth of our party cadres, especially of our middle cadres who in the main decide the success of party policy in all spheres of our construction. We must assist in every way the further growth of our party cadres and unhesitatingly remove from their positions incorrigible bureaucrats and red tape addicts, swelled headed little dictators, chatterboxes, inefficient people. We must boldly promote to positions of leadership new cadres, people who have proved themselves capable organisers and efficient workers.

Very important for the correct selection of cadres, for their growth and training, for the timely correction of mistakes and shortcomings in their work, is the check-up on the execution of decisions and on the tasks entrusted to every single party member. It is no exaggeration to say that most of the flaws and omissions in our work are due to the absence of a constant and correct system of check-up.

Only such a check-up can ensure a successful struggle against bureaucracy, against those incapable of guiding and organising the implementation of party decisions, against all distortions of the party line. This check-up, however, must be systematic and constant and be carried out by the leaders of the organisations themselves.

As we noted at the sixteenth plenum of the Central Committee, criticism and self-criticism within our Party have not yet become a genuine motive force of its development. In this respect congress has undoubtedly made a big step forward, especially in the discussions of the Five-Year Plan and of organisational problems.

The popularisation of constructive criticism and self-criticism in our Party and the laying bare of inadequacies in our work must be our con-

stant and paramount task after the congress as well, in all sections of the Party from top to bottom.

We must never forget that the height of wisdom for a real Communist is frankly to admit his mistakes, to boldly expose their causes and always to be ready radically to correct them.

In the Party and in all spheres of our life we must get rid completely of the harmful habit of not concretely pointing out mistakes lest we risk friendships, upset someone or create personal troubles. We must have no nepotism when deciding on party or state matters. The interests of the party of the working class, of the people, must stand above all such petty-bourgeois considerations and prejudices.

Arising from the discussion and certain questions addressed to me in writing, I wish to make two more remarks on matters of principle.

1. From what I said in my report, namely, that under our present conditions, with the development of the agricultural co-operatives, we do not consider nationalisation as an indispensable condition for the development of village economy, it should under no circumstances be concluded that it is possible in general to build socialism in the village without the nationalisation of the land. We consider, however, that by gradually winning over the poor and middle peasants into the co-operative farms, by developing the machine and tractor stations, by prohibiting the letting out of farms, by limiting and then prohibiting the buying and selling of land, by reducing and then abolishing rent through decision of the co-operative farmers themselves, when conditions permit, the practical problem of the nationalisation of land will be solved by the making over of all the land to the working peasants for their perpetual use. Thus the working peasant, who is today the slave of his small plot, will be enabled to make the widest use of the fruits of the land, which will be considerably increased through modernised and mechanised cultivation in the large scale co-operative farms.

2. The second remark refers to the definition of people's democracy given in my report. Some comrades who touched on this problem were inclined to put the emphasis mainly on that which distinguishes people's democracy from the Soviet regime, something which may lead to incorrect and harmful conclusions.

According to Marxism-Leninism, the Soviet regime and people's demo-



cracy are two forms of one and the same rule—the rule of the working class in alliance with and at the head of the working people from towns and villages. They are two forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The particular form of transition from capitalism to socialism in Bulgaria does not and cannot alter the basic laws on the transition period from capitalism to socialism which are valid for all countries. The transition to socialism cannot be carried out without the dictatorship of the proletariat against the capitalist elements and for the organisation of the socialist economy.

But whereas bourgeois democracy is the dictatorship of capital, of an exploiting big business minority over the great majority of working people, the people's democracy fulfils the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the interests of the overwhelming majority of the working people and realises the widest and most complete democracy—socialist democracy.

From the fact that the people's democracy and the Soviet regime coincide in the most important and decisive respect, i.e. that they both represent the rule of the working class in alliance and at the head of the working people, there follow some very essential conclusions concerning the necessity of making the most thorough study and the widest application of the great experience of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. And this experience, adapted to our conditions, is the only and best model for the construction of socialism in Bulgaria as well as in the other people's democracies.

The fears expressed by our comrade Todor Pavlov before this Congress that the definition of our people's democracy as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat might encourage attempts to violate law and order, made a considerable stir. Such fears are completely unwarranted. People's democracy, fulfilling the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, by its very essence and character cannot tolerate arbitrariness and lawlessness. This rule is strong enough to be respected by everyone, irrespective of his position.

We harbour no illusions—and in our Party there are no serious party members who can have such an illusion—that the road along which our Party is travelling will be smooth. We know that this road is hard and stony but it is the only safe road for the working class, the people and our country.

We realise that we still have many difficulties to overcome. But we also know—and our people know it well—that our Party has demonstrated that it is not afraid of difficulties in fulfilling its historic mission. Our Party has also shown that it knows how to overcome all difficulties, no matter how great they may be and from whatever quarters they may stem, whether from our internal or external enemies.

Now, armed with the historic decisions of our Fifth Congress, learning constantly and tirelessly from the great Bolshevik Party and our common teacher and guide, Comrade Stalin, there can be no doubt that our Party—headed by a Central Committee to be elected by the Congress and which will be Leninist-Stalinist in spirit, firmness, iron discipline, diligence, fearlessness before hardships and dangers,—will bring to a victorious conclusion in spite of everything the task we have begun of building a socialist society in our country.

*December, 1948.*



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